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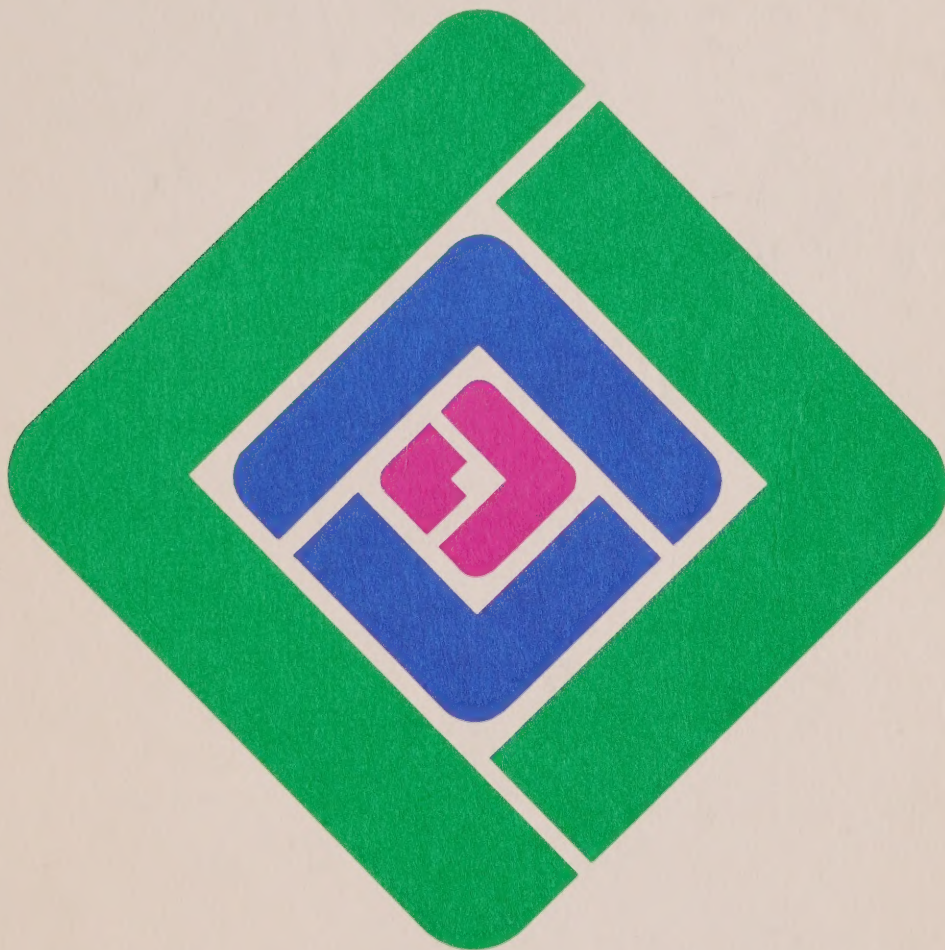
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**New
directions**

Proceedings of a Symposium on Downtown Cores

November 1 and 2, 1977



Ontario

Ministry of
Housing

Manhattan publication



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New directions

Proceedings of a Symposium on Downtown Cores

November 1 and 2, 1977

edited by R.R. Nykor
and G.A. Przybylowski



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Ministry of
Housing

Hon. C. Bennett
minister

D. Crosbie
deputy minister

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Introduction

These proceedings of the Symposium on Downtown Cores, held in Toronto on November 1 and 2, 1977, while new in themselves do not represent a first interest in the subject by either the Province of Ontario or the municipalities. Ever since the redevelopment sections of The Planning Act were introduced in the early 1950's, there has been a steadily growing interest in revitalizing downtown cores. Interest and activity accelerated as problems in the downtown cores intensified in the early 1960's, and an unparalleled opportunity to assess the magnitude of the problem presented itself with the introduction of major amendments to the National Housing Act in 1964. At that time the province agreed to participate in this urban renewal program and, in the four years to 1968 when the federal program was terminated, scores of Ontario communities completed in depth planning studies related to their core problems. The continued and growing interest by municipalities resulted in the province introducing its own Downtown Revitalization Program in 1976. The program received quick acceptance, and a number of municipalities now have downtown projects underway or in the planning stage.

The Symposium, a joint creation of the public and private sectors, represented the first attempt to deal with the total spectrum of core problems and the various solutions to them. It did not attempt, nor was it intended, to focus primarily upon the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program.

Instead the main thrust of the Symposium was to:

- promote general interest among all sectors in downtown revitalization particularly within smaller and medium sized communities
- provide an exchange of views and ideas on a variety of downtown related issues

- provide national and international exposure and participation in the idea exchange
- review the process for undertaking and developing viable downtown projects

That the Symposium was successful was due in great part to the contribution made by many agencies including:

- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Canadian Association of Housing and Renewal Officials
- International Council of Shopping Centres
- International Downtown Executives Association
- Municipal Liaison Committee
- Ontario Association of Planners
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- Ontario Heritage Foundation
- Organization of Small Urban Municipalities
- Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Urban Planning Department
- University of Western Ontario, Public Administration Diploma Program, Urban/Renewal
- Urban Development Institute

More importantly, the Symposium could not have been so effective without the contribution of the following individuals who chaired and organized the panel presentations:

Amborski, David., Ryerson Polytechnical
Institute
Billington, Harry., City of Toronto
Boggs, Michael., City of Vanier
Bullock, James., Cadillac-Fairview
Corporation
Crate, A.V., Alexander Crate Associates
Hill, William., International Downtown
Executives Association
Hosse, H.A., University of Western
Ontario
Lawn, Sandra., Town of Prescott
Myers, Robert., City of Kitchener
Nash, Harold., City of St. Catharines
Otto, Stephen., Ministry of Culture
and Recreation
Thompson, David., City of Thunder Bay
Thomson, William., Regional Municipality
of Waterloo

Wilson, Gerald., City of Peterborough
Wilson, William., Eaton's of Canada

To these agencies and individuals, grateful
appreciation is extended.

The papers presented at the Symposium and
reprinted in this publication have been
edited for clarity of meaning. They should
not be construed as representing the policy
of the Government of Ontario.

J.F. Brown,
Director,
Community Renewal Branch,
Ministry of Housing

June 6, 1978



Preparing the groundwork
opening remarks by
the Honourable John R. Rhodes,
Minister of Housing

1

Preparing the Groundwork

- opening remarks by the Honourable
John R. Rhodes, Minister of Housing

We have before us at this time in our nation's history a real opportunity to further the admirable objective of preserving the culture, tradition, and prosperity of our country's towns and cities; significant, in the sense that we have brought together at one time, a very representative cross section of the people who can give assistance to the future protection of the originality and uniqueness of these centres.

Now we cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading problems today.

That is why we have assembled here, experts in just about every area of downtown redevelopment, and we hope the information that is exchanged on this occasion, will help in guiding our opinions towards both the potential and need for immediate action in this crucial area.

In considering downtown revitalization, we should not underestimate the fact that some opposition, or even worse, apathy, will stand in the way.

Yet, for all of us who understand its necessity, the first accomplishment, creating a proper climate and generating a demand from within the community, may be the most important.

Between the idea and the reality, must come a dedication and sense of purpose until the final work is completed.

It has become increasingly clear that the deterioration of the core of many of our towns and cities is accelerating to the point which now seriously threatens the very survival of some historic communities.

Population trends, business formation, transportation corridors, cultural attractions, and in general, the lure of the big city, have

created on the one hand depopulation in smaller towns, and on the other, overpopulation in the large metropolitan areas.

This urbanization has not been created in any one single part of Canada, but has taken place in every province. So we can, at this conference, view the problems not so much as a regional phenomena, but rather within a national context.

As the movement of young people to the big cities took hold, and manufacturing industries moved to urban centres, any of our smaller communities began to lose the financial resources and population required to maintain a stable downtown core.

In agricultural areas, farm mechanization meant that fewer and fewer people were required to work the land. And in the resource industry - particularly in the north - technological advances in mining, pulp and paper and so on, reduced demand for labour intensive activities.

In some ways, a modern industrial state creates a concentration, in that industry establishes a base in a rather small geographical area, and in our country, this is mostly in the south; this in turn fixes the residency of most of the population in the same general proximity -- and so we find roughly 90 per cent of Canada's population within a 100-mile strip just above the United States border.

Yet, even within this 4,000-mile population/ industrial corridor, most of the people live in the large cities.

Obviously, there are economic and social reasons for this development, and the overall fixation for urban living has many attractions.

No doubt, some of us from outside the metropolitan centres have not yet understood all of these reasons, and I suspect, even some sociologists haven't either.

Pierre Boiste, a nineteenth century writer said, "There is no solitude more dreadful for a stranger, an isolated man, than a great city -- so many thousands of men, and not one friend." On the other hand, it was natural enough that an American theologian, Theodore Parker would write, "The union of men in large masses is indispensable to the development and rapid growth of their higher facilities. Cities have always been the fireplaces of civilization; whence light and heat radiated out into the dark, cold world."

In any event, for most of the twentieth century, we have witnessed the movement of the population to the big city, leaving the smaller towns in a static growth position, and much of the rest of the country barely populated at all.

But in Ontario, this seems to be changing.

Statistical data indicates that the growth rate in our larger cities is leveling off, and during the period 1971 to 1976, Ontario's rural population has grown at a faster rate than the urban population.

Overall, within this five-year term, the provincial population rose by 1.5 per cent. In urban Ontario, the increase was 1.3 per cent; and surprisingly, the rural rate climbed by 2.3 per cent.

In Southern Ontario, we find that between 1971 and 1976, Metropolitan Toronto's population only grew by .3 per cent.

But, in the municipalities adjacent to Metro, the population growth shaped up this way;

Durham Region up 2.8 per cent.

Halton Region up 4.1 per cent.

Peel Region up 8.9 per cent.

York Region up 4.6 per cent.

In fact, most of the major centres of the province are experiencing a lower rate of growth than areas around them, and this includes such cities as Sudbury, Windsor,

Hamilton, Kitchener, Ottawa and Thunder Bay to highlight some.

No doubt, higher land values, and in some instances, a shortage of land altogether, has brought about this turn-around. But perhaps, for we who are concerned about downtown improvement, especially in the smaller towns, the reasons are less important than the actuality. Therefore, we had better start thinking of core redevelopment as a priority, since it appears the trend will gain momentum as the years go by.

Therefore, I believe the time has really come for all of us to make the case for downtown revitalization.

I realize that some delegates to this symposium come from outside this province. Nevertheless, I still feel that most of you face the same basic challenge as we do in mobilizing support, and in developing tactical and realistic programs for solving the plight of the core areas.

In the seminars related to this conference, you will be able to study the Ontario approach, at least as far as we have gone in this connection.

As well, I believe much valuable advice about, and experience in other jurisdictions will flow from our many guest panelists.

So, I will refrain from the administrative and technical aspects of redevelopment and deal more specifically with the general social philosophy.

Fundamentally, meaningful downtown improvement cannot really take place without a commitment from the whole community. In this regard, a successful attempt at revitalization cannot be simply exported from one town or city to another. Given the diversity of culture and tradition across the country, a plan that works for one community may not be acceptable to a community elsewhere.

Still, this should not prevent us from learning techniques and exchanging ideas that could be modified to meet the circumstances of most areas.

Actually, by the very reasons of diversity and difference, the idea of downtown revitalization becomes even more exciting. It allows for the widest opportunity of imagination and local participation, while protecting the traditions and architectural heritage of the community.

After all, the worst thing imaginable would be to see every town or city in the country modelled after a single prototype. We already have enough sameness in our big cities, where the steel, chrome, glass and concrete make it hard to always tell whether one is in Toronto, Vancouver, New York, or Los Angeles.

Basically, any downtown revitalization program should involve four important themes.

- To bring together the entire community, not just businessmen and politicians, but everyone possible to promote an atmosphere for action -- since everyone benefits from a viable and healthy core area.
- To stabilize and make sound the financial base of a community.
- To encourage renovation of older business buildings and remove the uncertainties for established firms, while offering cooperation for new businesses who may wish to locate.
- And finally, but not the least important, to preserve the character and history of the community itself.

Within these guidelines, I firmly believe that we can, if we really desire, rediscover smalltown Canada.

But none of this can or will happen unless we establish a number of sound principles.

Municipal officials will have to reduce the all too often negative attitude and response towards those who would undertake redevelopment. This does not mean setting aside reasonable protection for well designed development that complements the architectural tradition of the community.

But if regulations are too strict, or unreasonable, much downtown redevelopment will be lost because the planning process may have the tendency to scare away new business potential, and red tape or an anti-business attitude therefore becomes very detrimental. This should not be allowed to happen.

The population trends mentioned earlier should open substantial opportunities for additional business expansion outside the major cities, and it would seem that there will be a natural interest by developers and others to follow in this direction.

But this will not always mean that location of new business will take place where we want it -- in the centre core.

Obviously, large investment decisions will be based on a number of factors; profitability, municipal services, parking and accessibility, and of vital significance -- a warm and friendly welcome.

Secondly, we have to primarily rely on the private sector for the funding of downtown revitalization. All of this means that any possibility for wide-spread redevelopment will be based on the cooperation principle and not the adversary system.

We will also have to dispel the fiction that suggests nothing interesting ever happens outside of the big cities.

For the most part, the heritage of Canada remains in the smaller communities, and with

the change in population patterns, this combination offers both the challenge and an opportunity to do some really important things -- both for profit and preservation.

Of course, every town or city may not need a major redevelopment in the downtown core. But I cannot think of very many that do not require at least some restoration.

Protecting the heritage and history of a community ought to be a motive all by itself. For in doing so, a number of values increase -- like property, pride and stability.

Mr. Chairman, in Ontario we believe that the initiative and final responsibility for downtown revitalization should remain at the local level with community-minded people.

It is here that the best plans can be developed which reflect both traditional values and an expression of local needs.

But I think on the whole, we do face a problem in many areas because of a rather non-aggressive approach towards instituting action, either for redevelopment or restoration.

Hopefully, this conference will act as a catalyst and make more people believers in the principle of downtown improvement.

As for the province, we also have a part to play.

But I do not see our role as one of taking full responsibility.

We are willing to assist local government, through limited strategic funding, and we have shown our commitment through the establishment of the Downtown Revitalization Program which began last year.

Through this vehicle, we have set aside some \$30 million over a four-year period.

In addition, there are other ways a municipality can receive help through the Business Improvement Provision of the Municipal Act, and the use of section 22 of the Planning Act.

As a further step, I am proposing to the provincial cabinet a student summer work plan related to the Experience '78 Program.

Under this plan the province will pay 75 per cent of the salaries of young people who are employed during the summer on downtown projects by local governments, chambers of commerce or designated business improvement areas.

I do not see the delivery of this kind of program posing any problem, since the students will be technically employees and, therefore, the responsibility of the agency which hires them.

As a matter of fact, a number of smaller communities have already indicated that they would welcome such a proposal.

In general then, and from a provincial viewpoint, the check list for small towns; Main Street, Ontario -- looks like this.

- Funding under the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program.
- An examination of the OHRP (rental) program as a means for renovating second and third storeys of downtown properties for residential purposes.
- A review of the business improvement legislation under section 361 of the Municipal Act, to increase its potential use.
- To provide regular information on downtown issues in a main street section within the Housing Ontario Magazine.
- To promote greater use of legislation which can assist municipal revitalization efforts, and I think here particularly of section 22 of the Planning Act and the

recent amendments that are being considered to reduce the red tape involved in the approval process.

- A continuation of joint/business/government workshops on planning and economic issues.
- The publication and distribution of definitive literature on planning, legal, marketing and promotional aspects related to downtown improvement.
- To undertake ongoing discussions with businessmen, developers, retailers, architects, municipal officials. Such a forum was responsible for the eventual development of the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program.

The purpose of holding this symposium was based on what we believe was a crucial necessity to focus attention on a real problem, and to set up an opportunity to share information and exchange ideas.

As I have said on other occasions, the preservation and revitalization of the core areas of our towns and cities, is one of the most important social objectives we will have to face during the next few years.

I hope this forum will help to stimulate some thought and action and to prepare the groundwork for a realization that if we fail to regenerate the vitality of our downtown areas, we also lose the opportunity to preserve our own heritage.



The diversity of problems and needs
of downtown areas across Ontario

2

2.1 Main Street, Ontario

William Thomson,
Commissioner of Planning
and Development,
Regional Municipality of Waterloo

We are present at this symposium to discuss the downtowns of the smaller settlements of Ontario. Communities ranging from several hundred people to 100,000. These communities constitute the backbone of Ontario and are both the oldest and newest of all settlements in the province. Each has had a different beginning, and has gone through major roles such as rural service centres, railroad towns, river-oriented service and trans-shipment points with each influence bringing a different kind of commercial and industrial function. In the 20th century it has been the reliance on trucking and the automobile which has wrought the greatest change on small town Ontario.

The growth of larger cities and metropolitan areas coincided with the growth of different transportation modes. This new mobility sucked the residents to the larger settlements and attracted new industry and employment opportunities. In turn these events spawned the growth of the services geared to people, hospitals, educational and cultural facilities, recreational attractions and the professions. The smaller settlements were by-passed, became dormitories and generally had a difficulty retaining their traditional functions. The larger of these centres fared no better but they at least had a good economic base upon which they could concentrate to at least hold their own.

Modern transportation and the growth of the larger cities caused problems in the small settlements. Industry traditionally located near the downtown moved, either to the edge of town or to the larger labour and market areas. Large shopping centres on the edges of the nearby cities brought to many a small downtown economic problems.

Crowded main streets, poor parking, deteriorating industrial buildings, competition of large nearby shopping centres, the younger people moving to larger places coupled with a lack of choice caused to the smaller downtown cores across the province major problems.

Yet the majority of these downtowns have tremendous attributes, great potential, and only require someone to look them over, create a plan of action within the economic means of the settlement to at least stabilize the decline and create again the lost charm and viability the area once enjoyed.

The larger settlements have, for example, been proponents of single-use zoning. City cores are divided into specific categories -- commercial, institutional, industrial, and residential. Many are now moving back toward mixed use zoning and like the Village by the Grange in Toronto suggest the new wave for future large downtowns - specialty stores all owner-operated built around central open courts above which are located apartments and townhouses holding 600 units and a small park nearby.

So what's so new?

Our small downtowns still have people living above stores in the core right beside industrial buildings. And many of these buildings are of historical and architectural significance. This same mixture that will be the salvation of large downtowns is already present in the smaller settlements. Look at what European settlements and major parts of large cities in the United States are doing - copying what is present in the small downtown.

We don't need expensive renewal and grandiose pie-in-the-sky plans. A plan is needed, some revitalization here, a little parking there, a fix-up over there, some new open space and the preservation of a charming historical building in the next block. An interested

merchant group and a committed council can plan to re-create a place for the people. After all, the downtown is the place for people and their needs must be considered. Do all this and the people in town will stay and shop and the crowded city slicker will be attracted. It won't come with wishing and hoping, it will come with hard work and dedication.

2.2 The Town of Paris: A Case in Point

Jack Bawcutt,
Mayor,
Town of Paris

It is surely the downtowns of smaller areas that constitute much of the character and heritage that we all enjoy in the province of Ontario.

Small towns can cater to the requirements of both urban and rural people and by this very function create a bond of understanding for the different types of problems and needs that exist.

Having made these comments, let me say that I am convinced that the preservation of many of our downtowns in Ontario is absolutely essential, both from economic and social points of view.

The economic benefits are obvious but we must also remember that downtown is the focal meeting place for people in a community and serves to bring people together. Therefore it seems very sensible to make the downtown meeting place both pleasant and attractive so that it can continue to serve its dual role.

The downtown belongs to all the residents in a municipality.

Now let me tell you briefly what has happened in my own town.

Paris has a population of 6,700 and the

downtown is situated in the geographic centre of the community. At the present time we do not have a serious problem but many of the buildings have been around for many years and some of them are beginning to show their age. Obviously something has to be done for the future. If not, then the signs of age will give way to deterioration and eventually, decay.

In order to try and plan for the future we established a "Downtown Revitalization Committee" of six plus myself. We had a representative of Council, Retail Merchants Assoc., Board of Trade, downtown property owner, downtown tenant, and a private interested citizen.

This committee worked very closely with our planning consultants who supplied information in various areas including a survey with our building inspector on the condition of the properties downtown.

When the committee was ready to make a provisional report, a special meeting of council was called with representatives invited from the community planning and renewal branches of the Ministry of Housing together with support personnel from our planning and engineering consultants. This meant that at the initial presentation we were able to keep all concerned groups in the picture from the beginning.

This was followed by a public meeting to which we invited downtown merchants and the public at large. This ensured that we had input from all segments of the community plus members of the provincial government and other interested agencies. What I am trying to impress upon you is that it is important to involve and inform as many people as possible to get a good cross-section of opinion and input. In our particular case the public meeting gave the committee a new direction to follow, as they did not accept all the recommendations presented. This

of course had the desired effect of ensuring that the public became involved in the future of our downtown.

Following the public meeting, our planners drew up a comprehensive report of all input to date and a copy was made available for public viewing at our town library.

During the summer months we hired a university student who spent most of his time interviewing the merchants in the downtown area and documenting their concerns and ideas. He also wrote a weekly article which appeared in our local paper to keep the public informed.

At the end of the summer we called a meeting of the downtown merchants and property owners. Our university student and our planners presented the results of the interviews.

The results of this last meeting is that the downtown merchants and business people are requesting town council to designate the downtown as a business improvement area.

I hope that the steps that we have taken in Paris will be of some help to you in your own planning.

2.3 The Town of Goderich

Gary Davidson,
Director of Planning,
County of Huron

In discussing some "New Directions" for downtowns I would like to concentrate on towns of under the population of 10,000 that will soon be faced with the spectre of the supposed arch-enemy of the downtown - the suburban plaza. For a small town a proposed centre raises a lot of issues, some economic, some social and some philosophical. Something fundamental is occurring and a reassessment is required.

Often the reassessment comes too late, the plaza is built and reassessment becomes reaction.

Through this process the downtown either takes on a new life or awaits what is felt to be its inevitable demise. There is a need for appropriate plans and actions to ensure that downtowns do not have their functions taken over by outlying plazas. Some municipalities still have the flexibility to plan with numerous options, others must plan as a reaction.

Goderich with a population of 7,200 falls into the latter category. A review of its reactions may provide others with ideas, but they will unlikely provide a path, for response was unique and internally generated.

Goderich has a uniquely shaped core area that is referred to as the "Square." It is a radial plan based on a central octagon. Like many small downtowns it represents both the commercial centre and an architectural chronicle of the 1870's classical style. It contains part of the town's heritage.

Both the core and its heritage were already suffering from neglect when a proposal to build a plaza was introduced. The battle was quickly joined by a hastily formed downtown merchants' group. If the military analogy is followed, it would be concluded that they lost. They lost twice, because two plazas were built. From another perspective, however, they won because the plazas led to a coalescing within the downtown. The merchant group did not wither but grew stronger in its determination to preserve the "Square" as a major commercial area and community focal point. Initially some face-lifting was undertaken through a paint-up scheme. However, this was realized to be only an initial step while a long term course of action was determined.

One important attribute of the "Square" was the heritage displayed through its buildings. The town was concerned with the demolition of

the older buildings and the unsympathetic rebuilding and renovating. The newly formed Goderich Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee shared this concern. Together with the merchants the Committee discussed ways in which the function of the "Square" could be enhanced by heritage preservation and restoration. Heritage work can often be dominated by a nostalgic orientation - looking backwards so to speak. In core areas this can lead to a serious problem for a downtown must survive in the future not in the past. It must adapt to serve a future function and heritage considerations should assist in this goal.

With the financial assistance of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, a Conservation District Study under the Ontario Heritage Act was initiated for the "Square." Although this study is still in progress, several important insights have already been gleaned. Heritage preservation alone will not save downtowns. A close liaison with the merchants should be retained to balance perspectives, between heritage and function and to keep concern for implementation in the foreground.

Downtown revitalization includes much more than heritage preservation. It is also expensive. The vast majority of these expenses must be borne by the business community and, to use a truism, must make "economic sense." The businessmen have formed a Business Improvement Area and in conjunction with the town are undertaking numerous improvements to the area. Improvements to the buildings are being proposed through the Conservation District Study. Things are moving and they are moving on a wide front.

There are numerous lessons to be learned from Goderich's brief history. The one that I feel is most important is the need for local commitment and response. If one considers the work and money required to preserve and promote the downtown so that it retains its function under changing circumstances, external assistance can be put in its proper and somewhat negligible

perspective. What then should the role of the province, various planners and local groups such as the Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee? If the will is there then, I feel they can act as an important catalyst by contributing to the psychology of success. They can help to get things going, especially if they respond quickly. The Ontario Heritage Foundation allowed Goderich to carry out a Conservation District Study. While in the total financial scheme of things this contribution was small, it was well timed. The insistence on an implementable plan avoided the "hysterical society" approach and got the heritage group, the businessmen and the town working together. As proposals for implementation, the expensive part, emerge it will be time for another catalytic action, possibly assistance with a specific building to maintain momentum and show it can be done. Through such action local resources can be stimulated for in the final analysis it is local desire and commitment that will determine then create the new directions for downtown cores.

2.4 Town of Kapuskasing

Matt Rukavina
Town Administrator,
Town of Kapuskasing

Kapuskasing is in need of Downtown Revitalization. Over a period of more than 50 years Kapuskasing has had its commercial focus shifted three times - from an original sprawled out business district along the highway through town and some of the main arteries leading into town in the 20's and 30's, to a unique "Circle" area, located further away, where a traffic circle and radii leading off same forced the commercial and public focus; and latterly including an enclosed shopping mall which serves a regional

function, and which is located quite close to the "Circle" area. We are faced with these problems;

1. The original business district along the highway and main arteries is primarily void of commercial use now, leaving old - style semi-vacant buildings as the first glimpse to the visitor of what makes Kapuskasing.
2. The "Circle" area requires renewed identification by means of building facelifts, upgrading of off-street parking facilities and public areas to keep pace with the mall attraction.
3. The main arteries leading to the downtown require modernization to interest people to search out the commercial areas.

Town Council recognized the problems and this year these steps were taken. A citizen Downtown Revitalization Committee was established composed of interested persons from the Downtown Business Association. The Committee was allocated some funds for study purposes and given these terms of reference:

1. Make a study on how the "Circle" and immediately surrounding areas can be revitalized by improving the appearance of buildings, beautifying public areas, providing improved traffic and parking facilities.
2. Suggest how the highway through town intersected by the two main arteries off the highway and those two arteries leading to the "Circle" area can be upgraded to attract their use by visitors and area people, including landscaping, improved public facilities; clearance where required and provision of new public buildings.
3. Propose how the area located in the triangle between the highway and the main arteries leading to the "Circle" area can undergo neighbourhood improvement.

4. Involve the business community financially in any revitalization together with the municipality and investigate how aid could be obtained from government sources.

The Revitalization Committee has taken these steps -

With funds raised through the Downtown Business Association from amongst its commercial members, an architect has been engaged and has presented a proposal to improve the exterior of the fronts of the buildings in the "Circle" area. This treatment consisting of ideas transformed into outside finish and paint would preserve the character of each building and at the same time lend some overall continuity to the area, improve the style of advertising signs and generally bring about a homogenous rather than heterogeneous appearance.

The Business Association has stated, "We are prepared to upgrade our property if the Council will also upgrade the adjacent public property." So a recommendation was made to Council to use the same architect to prepare plans on improving the landscaping of the public areas and the arteries leading to the "Circle" area.

The Town Council's view is that a comprehensive treatment of the whole area from the highway approaches to the "Circle" area must be adopted providing for neighbourhood improvement, rehabilitation, beautification and downtown revitalization.

These questions have been posed by the Revitalization Committee and Town Council to date:

1. What is Downtown? It is not necessarily just the commercial area. It must include the whole focal area that sells the community - it must be the area from the highway approaches to the main arteries into the actual commercial area.

2. It is difficult to calculate the economic upgrading of an area as set out in the existing Downtown Revitalization Program. This is very intangible and can only be sold if there is a three way program (private, municipal and provincial) whereby each one will benefit from doing things together rather than individually.

I offer the following suggestions on how Downtown Revitalization can work, as opposed to that presently available:

1. There is a need to meld existing government programs (with some modifications) of the Business Improvement Area, Downtown Revitalization and NIP using the maximum co-operation of the private sector, the municipality and the province.
2. The Business Improvement Area as set out in Section 361 of the Municipal Act should be amended. The present program only allows work to be carried out in a commercial area on public property and financed by the benefitting commercial properties with all funds repayable annually.

I suggest that the Business Improvement Area and Downtown Revitalization Program be integrated in this way:

- (a) If there is an agreement by the business community or part thereof to spend X dollars (based on an approved overall plan) on upgrading their property, this should be able to be financed over some period of years (perhaps 5 to 10) with all of the costs repayable by the commercial owners involved on an assessment basis, subject to some forgiveness of the interest and/or a portion of the principal, in order to encourage the business group.

Any improvements carried out by the commercial group should not be subject to additional assessment until the repayment term has been completed in order to eliminate

the duplication of added taxation while improvement repayment is being carried out.

- (b) There could be a fixed ratio of the funds required to be spent by the municipality on public lands and main arteries depending upon that which will be spent by the business community. In other words, the more the business community invests, the more the Municipality invests - all of course leading to the same end result, revitalization.
- (c) Based on the amount underwritten by the business community and the municipality, a certain percentage of that total, perhaps the 2/3 suggested in the Downtown Revitalization Plan, should be loaned by the province to help carry out the work with the forgiveness of the interest and the principal repayable over a pre-determined term. Provincial involvement would require the preparation of an overall plan with such plan financed on a 50-50 basis between the municipality and province.
- (d) The NIP program should be extended and encouraged in these programs as invariable the surrounding environs of any business and downtown area are just as important as the main focus itself and these adjacent areas are usually in need of improvement as they are normally not commercial and not residential - but a haphazard mixture.

I suggest that a "Community Involvement Plan" be established rather than a "Downtown Revitalization Plan" as downtown is too synonymous with commercial district leading to some doubt by the small residential tax payer.

I submit that the success of a
Community Involvement Plan is a tri-party
agreement that leads to the development
of a plan which

Stops the Visitor

Attracts the Visitor

Excites the Visitor and

Returns the Visitor,

where the visitor means any non-resident
whether he visits once a week, once a
year or once a lifetime.



How municipal authority and decisions
can affect the downtown

3

3.1 Minimum Passive Involvement

Brian Baxter,
Clerk Administrator,
Town of Cobourg

The Town of Cobourg has taken limited involvement in the development of our downtown core.

There is modest reference in our official plan which identifies the central business area and refers to attempts to maintain a continuous pedestrian shopping frontage, to efforts to plan a new commercial development as an extension to the core area rather than infiltrating into adjoining residential areas, to providing for adequate off-street parking and providing an adequate buffer planting strip between the commercial area and adjacent residential areas.

Off-Street Parking

After several years of discussion, the municipality acquired lands through purchase and expropriation, and constructed a 130-space off-street parking lot in 1974 at a cost of approximately \$150,000. An arcade has been acquired and developed linking the lot with the main street.

Victoria Hall Restoration

The municipality, with local citizen pressure, embarked on a \$1.7 million restoration project in 1971 of Victoria Hall, originally constructed in 1856-60. Approximately \$4 million has been spent on renovations to the building which contain our municipal offices, courts and art gallery. Victoria Hall is designed to be a "people place" and the focal point of the community; it's location in the centre of the downtown core is ideal for this purpose and the building has attracted visitors from all over the continent.

Business Improvement Area

The Cobourg Downtown Business Improvement Area was established January 1, 1975 and it's

Board of Management has become an active part of the municipal decision-making process. Town centre shopping is continuously promoted by the businessmen members and physical improvements have included dwarf tree planting on the downtown sidewalks and the installation of park benches along the main street.

Harbour Area

Cobourg enjoys a natural harbour one block south of the downtown area which has been used primarily for industrial purposes in the past years. In 1976, we successfully obtained a provincial grant and embarked on a Harbour Area Study at a cost of \$20,000. The study has now been completed and an Official Plan Amendment was enacted by Council. The study's objectives were as follows:

1. To encourage a form of development in the Harbour Area which will complement the overall development of the town in terms of the land uses permitted and the location of these uses;
2. To encourage the development of a series of key features designed to convert the Harbour Area in accordance with Goal 1 and to transform it into an area for both citizens and visitors to Cobourg;
3. To preserve the visual dominance, from the waterfront, of the Victoria Hall Clock Tower so that this historic landmark will not be obliterated by development which occurs in the Harbour Area;
4. To ensure that appropriate compatibility is established between existing development on the periphery of the Harbour Area and new development within;
5. To preserve and further develop the recreational potential of the town's waterfront area and the harbour in particular.

The main objectives of the plan are:

1. To create a functional southward extension of the Central Business District of the town;

2. To create a water-oriented park system designated as a link between the existing open space areas which are currently designated to the east and west of the Harbour Area;
3. To create a buffer area of Medium Density Residential housing on the west side of the Harbour Area in order to minimize the impact of new uses in the area on the Lower Density Residential uses located to the west;
4. To provide for the possibility of senior citizens housing in a downtown location within an easy walking distance of shops and services;
5. To provide for the development of a new shopping and office complex designed to complement and strengthen the existing central business district;
6. To provide for the development of a marina facility designed to provide accommodation for pleasure craft, to act as an anchor to the water-oriented park system and to act as a focal point for new development;
7. To provide for the development of a hotel complex focused on the marina and shopping complexes;
8. To provide guidelines regarding height and architectural control in order to maintain the visual dominance of Victoria Hall from the water and to establish a consistent relationship between the various components of development.

We are now preparing an application for participation in the Downtown Revitalization Program which is creating considerable interest in the community.

Services and Traffic

We have undertaken a \$70,000 roads, sewers, traffic needs study to identify problem areas and solutions for the municipality, particularly in the downtown area by taking the Harbour Area study and renewed emphasis on the town centre into consideration.

Connecting links leading to the downtown area have been reconstructed during recent years including four lanes of traffic and two new subways under the main railway lines. The wide sidewalks in the downtown core have also been reconstructed.

It is obvious that the desire, co-operation and enthusiasm exists for revitalizing our downtown area. After reviewing our participation, I find our municipal government has been actively involved in our downtown area in recent years. However, a small community like Cobourg is handicapped due to its lack of depth in administrative talent over many areas, these programs demanding time and expertise (i.e. planning) are reluctantly abandoned.

Municipal involvement in our area has affected the downtown area in a positive way and has led to further involvement. Certainly our objective is to keep the town centre as the heart of the community and our progress to-date seems to be satisfactory.

3.2 Moderate Active Involvement: Downtown Development

Bob Barrett,
Clerk-Administrator,
City of St. Thomas

The success of any program is determined by attitudes. We may all point to examples where negative or indifferent attitudes have prevented worthwhile programs and projects from "getting off the ground." Similarly, we should recognize that positive enthusiastic attitudes can inspire people to unprecedented efforts, dedication and determination to succeed, where success might otherwise seem unattainable.

It is most important therefore that municipal authority foster and develop positive constructive attitudes, and seek

out the support, assistance and enthusiasm of respected community groups and citizens in the initiation of any major program.

Recognition of the Role of Downtown

Hand in hand with the responsibility placed upon the municipal authority to develop constructive attitudes in the community, is the responsibility placed on the municipal authority to recognize the vital elements that combine to make a strong, vibrant, well-balanced community.

The municipal council might first seek an awareness and a clear vision of the needs and aspirations of the community, and develop a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the municipality. Broadly stated, those goals and objectives should include the initiation of measures designed to secure and maintain the health, safety, security, education, employment, and welfare of its citizens including their recreational, cultural and social activities.

The municipal council must recognize the vital importance of a strong vibrant central core in achieving the goals and objectives of the municipality. In the majority of instances, the role of the downtown should be recognized as the principal retail office, service, public administration area in the community, with a supporting residential role offered by a variety of housing types, complimenting and reinforcing the central core.

Policy Formation

We suggest that the municipal council should initiate a statement of intent to assist the council, Planning Board, Chamber of Commerce, and other community groups and citizens, to demonstrate their interest and community support, and to secure their cooperation and assistance in subsequent detailed studies, analyses, and other planning steps required to formulate the more definitive rationable to be the basis of the official plan.

The Official Plan

An official plan may be the most singularly important document to be prepared by a Planning Board, and adopted by a municipal council in setting forth goals and objectives for the community, and establishing a broad policy base on which subsequent action may be taken to implement the plan.

As previously stated, the official plan should designate the downtown core area as a principal retail office, service, and public administration area in the community. The plan should include policies reflecting:

- (a) The determination of the council to initiate actions aimed at the support, reinforcement, and revitalization of the downtown core,
- (b) Establishment of land use designations in the core area, and enunciate policy with respect to such land use,
- (c) Provision of initial policy with respect to the application of maintenance and occupancy standards, the provision of public services, and other physical aspects of the plan,
- (d) Statements with respect to the application of various provincial or federal/provincial programs for community improvement or development i.e. - Neighbourhood Improvement Program, Residential Program, Ontario Home Renewal Program, etc.
- (e) Guidelines and goals with respect to downtown improvement actions,
- (f) Designation respecting redevelopment areas, and policies respecting the implementation of redevelopment plans,
- (g) Policies on the adoption/and implementation of a downtown revitalization program,
- (h) Policy with respect to historical and/or heritage designation applicable to properties within the core area.

Implementing the Plan

Subsection 20 of the Planning Act stipulates that a bylaw that conforms with an official plan shall be deemed to implement the official plan, whether the bylaw is passed before or after the official plan is approved.

Perhaps the most singularly important bylaw to be enacted is the comprehensive land use or restricted area bylaw. Such a bylaw must conform with policies set forth in the official plan with respect to the designation of land uses, as between residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, etc., and must set standards with respect to permitted uses, minimum zone requirements i.e. minimum frontage, minimum setbacks, yard requirements, etc. contain provisions for development control with respect to the sufficiency of public highways, access thereto, off-street parking and loading areas, provision of public walkways, control over grades or changes in elevations or contours of lands, the disposal of storm waters and the location and design of buildings and structures and landscaping features in respect of the development or redevelopment of lands.

Maintenance and Occupancy Standards

With the enactment of the Ontario Building Code, a uniform standard is now applicable across Ontario, which should in time remove most of the difficulties associated with non-existent or ineffective building code standards. The Ontario Building Code combined with the Ontario Plumbing Code, Ontario Electrical Code and other regulations such as the Hotel Fire Safety Act, Industrial Safety Act, Department of Labour Act etc. has provided us with a substantive bulwark of regulations, which if effectively enforced, should ensure sound, well-constructed and safe new buildings and structures. It is to be hoped that the Ontario Fire Safety Code will soon become a reality and will form an integral part of our building regulation toolkit.

All too frequently however, we tend to promote the erection of new buildings and do not give sufficient heed to the application of standards to existing older buildings and structures. The adoption of standards of maintenance and occupancy, sensibly applied, should be a major tool for our use in encouraging the conservation and improvement of sound older buildings. To some extent this might be complimentary to the designation of appropriate properties as heritage buildings. Most of us would be quick to object to the wholesale demolition of all of the older buildings in our downtown area, many of which have historical and social ties within our community life style. At the same time, there is little point in arbitrarily trying to preserve every building which may have some historical or heritage significance, if such buildings have been allowed to fall into disrepair, are functionally obsolete, or cannot be found to service any useful purpose.

Parking Facilities

It is imperative that off-street parking facilities be provided in sufficient quantity, in convenient easily accessible locations and developed to acceptable physical standards to invite and hold the shoppers and visitors to the downtown core areas. While this is the topic of another panel, might I just say that sufficient study must be undertaken by the municipality to determine the community need for off-street parking facilities and to develop a program setting out minimum standards for the development of such facilities and their financing over a specified period of time.

Public Works

A continuing program of public works is not only necessary in every municipality to realize improvement but to maintain a reasonable minimum standard. It is important that the downtown core be incorporated in the capital program to the extent that funds will permit an on-going program of new construction, replacement and improvement of sidewalks, curbs and gutters, roads, lighting,

lanes and other public facilities in the downtown core area. It has been long recognized that public improvement creates a strong initiative for private property owners to dress up and improve their premises. The reverse should also be true.

Downtown Revitalization Program

Many downtown areas in municipalities in Ontario have suffered a serious decline as a result of the age, condition, obsolescence and incompatibility of many existing buildings and uses in the core area, a lack of community interest and awareness of the vital role the downtown area plays, not only in the financial stability of the community, but in its character and in its cultural and social life as well. In addition, the proliferation of suburban malls have drawn off much of the business and focal interest from the downtown area. Consequently, in many instances, strong concerted effort will be required to preserve and revitalize the downtown area and to stimulate economic interest in its conservation and redevelopment. We have relied far too long on the private sector to initiate development or redevelopment and must quickly come to the realization that local government initiative must be taken in such matters as planning, servicing, land assembly and promotion to secure the interest and investment of the private sector in our downtown revitalization programs.

The cost of acquiring, demolishing and servicing for the redevelopment of properties in the downtown area frequently outweigh the economic benefit to be derived by the private developer or at least exceeds the investment he is prepared to make in a project which does not promise sufficiently high returns to justify his risk. In addition, in the majority of instances, the multitude of individual ownerships, easements, rights-of-way (both registered and unregistered) makes it nearly impossible for the private investor to assemble lands quickly, economically and without encumbrance.

On the other hand, the municipality is now being offered effective tools which will permit long term funding for land assembly, which may be fully recovered in the resale, lease or rehabilitation of property and the realization of significantly higher tax returns than the existing use generates. In addition, the municipality with its powers of expropriation has the ability to clear hurdles thrown up by recalcitrant owners and to clear property title problems. We believe that it is important that municipalities develop new methods for dealing with the disposition of lands by lease, partnership arrangements etc. to take the best advantage of the opportunities offered and to ensure a sound return of the investment to the community.

Financing

The question is often asked "How can we afford to do this?" Given the acknowledgment of the vital economic role the downtown plays in the municipality's financial structure, one should be asking the question "How can we afford not to do this?" The real question should be not whether we can or cannot initiate a revitalization program, but rather how that program can be effectively adopted.

The guidelines for the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program pertaining to funding criteria for that specific program are outlined. However, we should not ignore the existence of other federal/provincial financial assistance programs in initiating redevelopment action. For instance, should the main street in your community be designated a connecting link, under agreement with the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, a 75% subsidy may be obtained on eligible works in place of the normal 50% road subsidy. Downtown improvement works incorporated with essential public works, which may be eligible for provincial subsidy, can often be done with savings to the municipality and the

availability of such subsidy financing can provide the initiative for such public improvement.

In conclusion, we must continue to seek means and to adopt policies, practices and control which will enable us to give support and reinforcement to our downtown cores and to initiate redevelopment and revitalization where required to return our downtown cores to the central focal point they truly ought to be.

3.3 Maximum Active Involvement

Mary Ellen Johnson,
Deputy Planning Director,
City of Vanier

Introduction

The Vanier experience flows out of the cumulative effect of certain influences and requirements which eventually resulted in the municipality developing a policy of maximum involvement in core redevelopment activities. The influences or requirements are not unique to Vanier's circumstances. Some, or all, may exist in your municipality and affect your present and future approach to Downtown Improvement.

Influences

There are certain unchanging facts of economic life, politics and group psychology that from the very outset of the decline of many of Ontario's downtowns have dictated which downtowns survived as centres of commercial activity, which downtowns just managed to hang on, and which downtowns died. Some of these factors are:

1. Actions, or inactions by external influences; external investment in the core by senior levels of government or by private enterprise.
2. Actions, or inactions, by internal influences: investment, or withdrawal

of investment, in the core by old family money, local industries or head offices of businesses that have outgrown the label of "local."

3. Historical or traditional influences:
the city or town may have been a traditional shopping and service centre for its surrounding area. However, even strong habits can be easily disrupted by altered highway systems, or by new suburban shopping areas. Further to this, a declining hinterland may adversely affect the core in two ways. First, by reducing the financial potential of customers from the outside area to shop, and second by injecting people displaced from the hinterland into the core (downtowns of any city are habitually filter areas for new and poor residents). It's been said that attitudes are the key to the success of downtown improvement programs. Conversely, there are certain key groups and figures in any town or city, and it is their attitudes, which if negative, are often at the root of the problems of the downtown.
4. Attitude of residents to change. Do these people know, or care about the economic and social significance of the downtowns? Do they care, but are they misdirecting their concern to an effort towards "Stop all change"?
5. Attitude of businessmen to the downtown,
(a) Do they understand the economic and social forces at play? (b) If so, do they care? Are they just hanging on, or are they actively fighting for personal economic survival? For example, will the most successful businessmen be the first to move out to the new shopping centre?
6. Attitude of elected municipal officials and civic administrators: Do they understand what is happening? Can they spot the trouble signs? "The closing of the carpet factory at the foot of Main Street will only throw 50 people out of work and it was an eyesore anyhow, so don't worry about it. Someone will

buy the property, or we can always get another NIP program and buy the land for a park." The result actually is that fifty families have a much lower standard of living and may be forced to leave the municipality. The snowball effect of the situation may not even be noticed by city hall until too late. Or, a quality family-run furniture or clothing store goes out of business, and is replaced with a warehouse type operation, (with head office in Toronto), and the whole visual, commercial and social impact of the older business on the Main Street is completely lost. Do the city fathers really grasp what is happening?

Now many of these factors have already had an impact on your downtown or you would not be here today. I've placed the attitude and the influence of civic officials last quite intentionally because this factor has an immense effect on the fate of our downtown. Elected politicians shape, lead and reflect the will or wish of the residents of their municipality.

The civic administrators reflect the wish of the politicians, probably there are developers in the audience who have had the experience of going to city hall to get information on the downtown core, and quickly being turned off by the attitude of the planners as to the downtown and its future. It becomes obvious that city has no faith in the core as reflected in the attitude of its staff and politicians.

A chart and graph distributed with this session's material show that municipal attitudes are the major cause from which process, and result occur. The chart is really an amalgam of possibilities - varying, depending on intensity - and nature - of inputs at any given time.

Involvement

If a municipality finds that downtown conservation, rehabilitation or redevelopment, promoted through private initiative, plus some city hall support, is just not going to take off, then the idea of greater municipal involvement in project planning, publicity and implementation, as well as the bringing of government financial funding into the core area has to be explored. However, all government programs have a price - and the price is not only a monetary one. They involve the opening up of local affairs to a sometimes slow enquiry and approval process by the governments and their agencies.

Just as municipal leaders choose when, or if, support funding from other levels of government should be requested to assist in the development or conservation of the downtown, they must also decide when, or if, the municipality should move from the position of merely supporting downtown improvement and development to a position of more active involvement.

Active involvement can be (1) the municipality as the author of the project, with developers carrying out implementation, (that is, the municipality plans, promotes and then 'hands over' the project), or, (2) the municipality acts as a partner with the developer through the whole process, (or), (3) the municipality acts as its own developer for its core area.

There are several reasons why a municipality may decide to move from the position of passive support of core renewal, to a more active involvement in what is happening.

- (a) Control - the municipality may have a strong commitment to its initial renewal plans and wants to ensure those plans are really adhered to.
- (b) Investment - the municipality may have already entered the picture as a developer through land banking or landholding in the downtown from previous programs or projects.

- (c) Political Responsibility - the source of the major funding (public or private) is demanding that the municipality be an active partner for reasons of viability, economics, stability, respectability or fear of local objections to the project.
- (d) Information - the municipality wants to assure itself the project will "go", and sees close involvement with the developer as the best source of information about what is really happening; for example - changes in attitudes by backers, the developers, or potential tenants.
- (e) Legal, Administrative or Technical Reasons The need for acquisition of expropriation of land may be required. The developer and the municipality, see municipal involvement facilitating that process, or the municipality may wish to take an active role in order to protect property owners, businessmen and residential tenants.
- (f) Physical Involvement - The municipality plans to be a major tenant in the project.

One thing is evident, no improvements have occurred in Vanier during the last 12 years. In fact, Vanier's core is a textbook example of a deceased downtown. Fortunately, the official plan carries some very strong statements about the need for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of Montreal Road. In 1974, the city retained yet another consulting firm, this time one that specialized in physical design. A very general conceptual plan for the entire 42 acres of the downtown was prepared. This plan is probably the final presentation of bulldozer renewal as a planning tool in Canada and as such, it should be placed in the Museum of Man. Fortunately, it was never adopted by the city council. During this period, there were some positive developments. The municipality did upgrade the infrastructure in the core to a level appropriate to support substantial

redevelopment projects. A commercial property standards bylaw was prepared, and adopted. The attitude of the city council changed immensely during the years between 1970-1977. An early attitude of 'leave us alone, development is too much trouble,' was replaced with a progressive and realistic approach to the needs of the commercial core. Starting in the spring of 1976, up-to-date surveys and a market analysis of the core were carried out. By the fall of 1976, when the Downtown Revitalization Program was announced by the provincial government, the City of Vanier was ready with an official plan containing appropriate statements about core redevelopment, up-to-date secondary studies, demographic, land use, traffic, parking and building condition studies, a commercial property standards bylaw, an area designated as a redevelopment area under Section 22(2) of the Planning Act, and a Downtown Revitalization Plan under Section 22(5) of the Planning Act for a commercial project on 3.3 acres at the key intersection of the downtown. It was anticipated the municipality and the developer would carry out any operation in active partnership. By February, 1977, the municipality had the approval of the Minister of Housing both to the redevelopment plan and the project for funding under the program, subject to the obtaining of a developer and a major tenant.

At the beginning, I talked about external influences. We, in Vanier, have good reason to understand the importance of this factor. Vanier is in the national capital region. Of course, it is now adversely affected by the political decisions of the federal government regarding decentralization of federal offices and services away from Ottawa. Needless to say, Vanier awaits a developer.

In spite of the frustration which we have experienced, there are positive results which will, I think, assure eventual success.

The municipality has developed more realistic goals than it earlier held for the downtown. Downtown development and how to go about it is now a burning issue for politicians, staff and citizens. The need for constant revision and change of plans is now well understood. Municipal officials are learning from each encounter with developers just how to proceed to negotiate a project. The importance of external and internal forces is better understood.

One thing is certain, Vanier's role in the development of its downtown will not be a passive one, but will feature a high degree of municipal involvement, control and fiscal responsibility.

3.4 Closing Comments on The Municipal Role

Michael Boggs,
Administrator,
City of Vanier

The remarks of all persons involved with this panel have turned on attitudes, and perceptions, and the transmission of good or bad attitudes and perceptions into actions that affect a municipality's well-being through the health of its downtown. How finely tuned is your municipal decision making machinery? Are you ready to cope with the problems of downtown improvement? Is there mutual understanding

and trust between residents, businessmen, city administrators and politicians? Are there gaps or breaks in the chain? Example - when the official plan and zoning bylaws were prepared, did all the public really have an effective opportunity to express its views?

Did the downtown businessmen or did public involvement procedures follow only the shadowy guidelines of the Planning Act? Have secondary studies been prepared? How long ago? And again did all those most concerned have a chance to speak their minds? Is there a development control bylaw? Does the municipality have and enforce a property standards bylaw? Does it use the machinery of the heritage conservation act to protect what should be treasured buildings or areas of the downtown? Is there an architectural review committee functioning? Is core redevelopment now considered a major civic issue and by whom? Whose attitude and value code is really coming forward in council decisions the members of council? The staff? Pressure groups of various sorts and colours? Property owners in the core? Tenants and homeowners in the core? The residents of the municipality at large?

All of these groups by presence or absence, by action or non-action, by words or by remaining silent, affect and ultimately effect the future of the downtown.



Parking issues in the downtown **4**

4.1 Downtown Parking: An Overview

Barry Bernstein,
Businessman,
City of Kitchener

I would like to comment on the anomaly of civic minded groups and civic officials promoting downtown revitalization on the one hand and suburban developments on the other - simultaneously.

This type of planning has been occurring in North America for many years, both to the detriment of downtown core areas and plazas alike. The initial shock wave is felt by the downtown when suburban shopping centres begin to sprout up around the perimeter of the particular town or city. The centre of the city has historically been the focal point of all the major retail, banking and government services, as well as the social activities of the city. The shock has been so great in some instances that after 20 years, there are many downtown areas that are no longer viable. . .they attract a decreasing percentage of the region's consumers dollars; investment is practically nil; taxes returned to local governments are a diminishing low level and the incidence of crime have increased.

The erros in planning, which are political decisions, do not stop at the downtown core. . .this kind of political planning, or should I say lack of planning and properly constituted zoning laws, allowed a proliferation of the results. . .once viable plazas are now second rate, each in turn becoming redundant as a newer, larger, more attractive mall is erected.

Who has gained by this merry-go-round?

It certainly has not been the local businessman or independent retailer who is being purshed further and further into oblivion. It has not been the consumers because as the chains expand so do their overheads and therefore the cost of providing

goods and services, and as a consequence, the prices paid by the consumer. I am even doubtful if the municipalities have benefitted that much. . .they have had to raise millions of dollars to service the urban sprawl and at the same time initiate renewal programs to try and bring back their core areas.

Surely it is high time that our elected officials put the lid on indiscriminate expansion and concentrate on developing what we have, instill some measure of quality back into our cities and towns. We just cannot have it both ways. . .strong, viable, crime free core areas and unlimited suburban developments.

Parking is the greatest problem facing the health of the downtown.

OR IS IT?

Parking in the downtown core area is probably one of the most contentious issues that any downtown business group deals with and in turn becomes a source of concern or if you wish, an irritant to city councils and staff.

Ask any downtown retailer, professional or anyone who depends on the public for their livelihood and they will all agree that parking is inadequate, costs too much and that the city council and staff are not doing a damn thing about it! Oh, yes, one thing more. . .that the meter maids give out too many tickets and are very swift in carrying out their duties and what are they trying to do - drive business away from the downtown?

Well, of course it's easy to blame all the problems on parking or lack of the same, but let's be realistic. What these people are saying in effect is that their share of the market has decreased over the years and they do not see the numbers of people in the core area that they once saw, and they feel that the plazas with "free" parking have drawn away their customers, and if they could only provide competitive parking, then they would

enjoy a surge in business again. Well, as in most statements, this is partially true.

However, let's look at a fairly typical small town or city. The buildings in the core area are probably 40 to 60 years old. The street level floors of these buildings are in the main, kept neat and up-to-date, the second and third floors are another matter. . .it is not unusual to see them vacant, dirty with broken windows and the exterior in need of repair. . .certainly not an inviting appearance.

The streets and sidewalks are usually narrow and in some cases in need of repair and in general not much has been done to revitalize the area in the last quarter century.

Now, supposing a major plaza is erected on the edge of this town, and has the usual consumer attractions. . .one or two department stores, supermarkets, 50 to 100 stores, all branches of national chains. . .it is big, it is powerful and it is glossy and it certainly draws thousands of people, many of them away from the downtown core.

After a week or two some of the downtown retailers get together and decide that they are in trouble and form a Business Association so that they can pressure the city into providing more parking lots. . .because that is the answer to the downtown problem. This of course is not the answer.

Is the local retailer or businessman at fault?
Is the civic administration at fault?
Could it be that both share the blame for what has happened in the downtown core? I think they do.

During the last 25 to 30 years, the core area thrived. . .businesses earned profits and the city collected their taxes. . .neither one plowed back enough of the monies into the core. . .now, after years of neglect, it's late and it's going to be expensive to promote healthy growth and development.

The city must now look at it's streets, underground services, sidewalks, and parking, all the services required for development and renewal. . .the local business community must now take stock of itself and refurbish it's banks, grocery stores, supermarkets, clothing stores and department stores. . . it must become competitive. . .competitive in appearance, competitive in merchandise mix, competitive in pricing, competitive in parking. . .in short they have to compete for that consumer. . .as you can see, parking is only important if the consumer has been given a good and sufficient reason for wishing to park in a given area. . .otherwise, you can have all the parking in the world it will remain half empty.

I hope you will not misinterpret my feelings towards the value of parking in the downtown core. You can reverse everything I have said. . .you can have everything going for you and not have adequate parking and the core will stagnate. I believe that it is essential to have adequate parking spaces, strategically located throughout the core area. . .and the number of spaces provided should look after the peak load and not the average requirements.

The principle of direct financial support by downtown businessmen for the purpose of providing short term customer parking is an interesting point to discuss.

Firstly, any scheme whereby the core area is the recipient of an increase in the number of parking spaces has to be considered as a plus factor for the area. However, where you have a group of businesses owning a common area and under their management, I feel that certain problems could arise.

Problems such as financing, interference with appointed manager, rate structures and the location of the parking lot -- does it give an unfair advantage to one merchant over another, and as a consequence, do petty jealousies begin to raise their heads, destroying what harmony and co-operation were there initially.

There is no doubt that in some centres the problems have been solved and the concept works well. I, for one, would have to be convinced of the merits of the system before endorsing it for our core area.

I believe that a municipal body can do the best job for the downtown core. As a branch of the local government, there is no doubt that they have more expertise at their disposal than do the local businessmen.

The parking administration can plan for the location of parking spaces in conjunction with the planning, roads and transit departments. And in this way, best serve the needs of the town or city.

If I have one major beef with the parking administration, it is that so many opportunities have been lost over the years in not acquiring downtown core properties that today would solve so many of our parking problems. It almost appears that in the early years of downtown parking, people were appointed to the post of "Manager", more as a caretaker than as an entrepreneur in the field of parking. They were there to see that the nickels and dimes were collected and desposited in the bank. Expansion of core area parking amounted to find a street that did not have any parking meters, and promptly erecting same. Possibly, that is an unfair criticism, but that is the way it looks from here.

There is no less a need for foresight today. . .as the problem becomes more pressing, more complex, and more costly. As local governments becomes involved with urban renewal programs and commence to revitalize the downtown core areas they invite developers to invest millions of dollars in new office towers, retail and commercial complexes, and with that they accept the obligation and responsibility to provide adequate short and long term parking. This responsibility, in many cases, is accepted with much trepidation. . .and for very good reasons. Money being

the main one. Where are the funds going to come from?

Should the monies required for downtown parking come from the general taxes, or should they come from the user of the parking facilities, or the businesses in the area that will benefit most from the people who park in the area.

I believe that all three should share the financial burden, as all three benefit, and as they benefit in varying degrees, so should the amount of the burden vary.

Let us have no illusions about parking facilities that the city provides. The city gains a good percentage of it's dollars from the central core area and as the core area develops and investments increase, so do the taxes received by the city. Further, as this core develops, it attracts more people and more investment and this snowball effect causes parking spaces to be utilized more fully, with more turnover and as a consequence, the parking administration does get out of a deficit situation and into a surplus factor. Properly programmed and managed, this is a realizable fact and not fantasy!

The parking provided has become self sustaining and that is the way it should be. . .it should not be subsidized by the city except in it's initial stages and that is where the general tax payer comes in.

But sooner or later over the long haul, say 3 to 5 years, parking facilities should pay their own way and return tax dollars to the city. There is one important point that we should not overlook . . .the parking provided not only keeps the core healthy, it is also instrumental in the development of new complexes in the core area which, from time to time, they are erected and occupied and return new found tax dollars to the city coffers.

One of the problems encountered in providing parking in the core area, specifically in new parking ramp garages, is that initially the spaces are not fully utilized by the short term parker it was intended to serve. Therefore, a percentage of the space should be given over to the long term or monthly parker, often at a rate that does not reflect it's true value. It takes a few years before the new parking facility becomes widely used. . .it is not an overnight sensation, and is usually criticized for being a white elephant. . .except that in 3, 4 or 5 years it is well utilized and the long term or monthly parker who was given a monthly lease, in fact was welcomed with open arms because he was going to defray some of the operating expenses, now becomes a pain and problem.

Can we now send this long term parker out in the street by arbitrarily cancelling his lease because we desperately need this parking space for short term parking, which not only was the main reason for supplying the space in the first place, but of course is much more lucrative. . .or, can we raise the parking tab to double or triple to better reflect the true worth of the space. . .or, do we leave him there and subsidize his parking?

I think that for one, the monthly parker should be allowed to remain in the parking space he occupied, because no doubt he is there because his office or business is nearby and it is convenient and necessary for him to have his car downtown. Secondly, he should not have to be subsidized by the city. The parking space is provided and must be paid for by the user. . .I do think some leeway or flexibility must be given in arriving at how much is fair as regards to the monthly bill.

Thirdly, as the parking facility starts to be used and becomes financially sound, it is then time to make a move and erect another facility where it is needed. The monthly parker from the original facility may be induced to move to another location, less convenient, but also less expensive.

In this way, you achieve some help to offset initial operating expenses, you provide additional parking in the core area, you discharge some responsibility to the monthly parker and you free parking spaces in demanded areas for the short term parker.

The purpose of providing parking ramps or lots in the downtown core area is not primarily to service the long term parker, but to accommodate the short term parker. . .that should be and must be the only reason for the purpose of providing parking. The monthly parker is served only on an interim basis. . .the monthly parker receives prime space at a fraction of it's true value and as I have stated previously, helps to offset some of the initial operating expenses. . .but this type of parker is of secondary importance to the development of a healthy core area. . .the short term parker is of prime concern. . .for without that shopper or person conducting his or her business in the downtown core, there just is no viable core area. The central city must always remain a people oriented place.

4.2 Principles for Downtown Parking

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Introduction

The potential effect of increasing the parking supply in a downtown area should be carefully considered because the importance of parking to a central business district cannot be disputed. However, there is a tendency to equate the economic difficulties of a downtown area with the shortcoming of the parking system.

It is true that if the parking supply serving a central business district is significantly substandard with respect to quantity and location, it can have an adverse

effect on the economic activity of the area. On the other hand, it should be stressed that parking is only one element affecting the economic prosperity of a downtown. Pedestrian amenities, efficient traffic circulation, an attractive physical plant, and modern merchandising techniques are among the basic determinants to the success and stability of a downtown.

A truly prosperous central business district must depend on a balanced group of attributes and while parking can play an important role, it should be considered in its proper perspective. The other elements of an attractive downtown may be more difficult to achieve or implement but they are essential if the downtown is to achieve its potential.

Downtown Transportation Principles

Parking is only one facet of the downtown oriented trip. The following set of principles should help guide the formulation of a general plan for a downtown. The principles deal with all aspects of movement, including vehicular circulation, parking, public transportation, pedestrian circulation, and service and emergency vehicle facilities. These are intended only as guides. Although the principles may range from the obvious to those that would be extremely difficult to implement, nevertheless, it is desirable to set them forth.

Vehicular Circulation

1. The purpose of streets in a downtown should be:
 - (a) To provide access to the area and access to land uses in the area.
 - (b) To serve short haul traffic (which is not bypassable) moving across the area.

Long distance, conventional through traffic should be avoided on these streets.

2. The circulation system of a downtown should connect with both existing and proposed major thoroughfares beyond the area.
3. The downtown street system should be designed to handle peak hour traffic loads for a period of 20 years. Street designs should be based on practical capacity (from 400 to 500 vehicles per lane per hour in the core area, and 750 or more vehicles per lane per hour on approach routes).
4. The vehicular circulation pattern should be understandable and comprehensive to the average driver.
5. The system should be flexible; ie., should present more than one opportunity to reach a given destination.
6. There should be a directness to the circulation pattern so as not to compel round-about travel.
7. The ability to circulate around those blocks or areas which are high traffic generators should be provided.
8. The circulation system should be designed so as not to exaggerate the quantity or pattern of turning movements.
9. For the sake of safe and convenient pedestrian crossings, streets should have no more than four moving lanes, unless medians with suitable pedestrian refuges are provided.
10. Complex intersections (more than four-legged) and multi-phase signals should be avoided.
11. The arrangements of streets and land development should be designed to avoid conflicts and to compliment each other. Land parcels should not be so large as to make circulation extremely difficult,

and conversely, the street pattern should not cut land areas into parcels too small to permit sound development.

12. Special vehicle traffic generators (such as parking facilities, hotels, medical arts buildings, etc.) should be located where they may be served directly and efficiently by the major street system.

Parking

Parking facilities should serve clearly identifiable classes of users, as follows:

1. Long term or all day employee parking (for those employees who use cars for commuter purposes only).
 - (a) Although this type of parking is fairly significant in magnitude, it should be recognized that it is in direct competition with public transportation. Therefore, it should receive proportionately less attention of all types of parking that are to be provided as city size increases.
 - (b) Parking for this type of user should be located at the periphery of the area on other than prime land.
 - (c) All day commuter type parking should be concentrated in large facilities with the size of facilities controlled essentially by the availability of land and the degree of vehicular access which can be provided.
 - (d) Such parking facilities should be located in direct contact with major vehicular entry points to the downtown.
 - (e) Facilities should be distributed in accord with the direction of vehicular approach to the area.

2. Employee parking for executives and others requiring midday use of cars.

- (a) Such facilities should be extremely convenient for their users, even to the extent of being located within buildings which generate or require their use.

- (b) This type of parking should be limited in quantity.

3. Patron parking.

- (a) These facilities should be conveniently located in relation to the retail area they serve.
 - (b) Units should be moderate in size and related to vehicular access capacity.

Transit

1. Maximum use should be made of public transit facilities to and from the downtown. This involves taking a positive approach to transit improvements, not only in the downtown, but including such aspects as route extension and other outlying improvements.
2. From the standpoint of the downtown, the most important transit patron is the employee. Maximum accommodation of commuter loads by transit will most effectively reduce peak hour vehicular requirements.
3. To the extent possible, the principle of through-routing should be applied to all transit facilities entering the downtown to avoid the looping and artificial doubling of transit vehicle loads. This involves establishing continuity of routes through the area for surface bus lines.
4. Land uses should be so located to capitalize on transit facilities as well as to maximize the market for transit. Similarly, transit should be so located to serve land uses most advantageously.

Pedestrian Circulation

- 1. Walking should be made feasible and desirable by placing related land uses to, and where possible, adjacent to one another.
- 2. A suitable environment for pedestrians should be established. This should include, in addition to other amenities, protection from weather.
- 3. Pedestrian-vehicle conflicts should be minimized. To the extent that they occur, they should be designed properly. For example, these conflicts are most serious at intersections where turning movements, as well as through traffic, complicate pedestrian crossings. Proper design of both streets and land uses can help resolve this problem.

Service and Emergency Vehicle Circulation

- 1. Emergency vehicles must be able to reach any portion of the downtown in a reasonably direct manner.
- 2. Servicing of the downtown must recognize the needs of:
 - (a) Regular merchandise vehicles;
 - (b) Quick stop service (such as mail and newspaper trucks); and
 - (c) Special purpose vehicles, such as construction and maintenance trucks.
- 3. Two kinds of service facilities are required. The first, and most appropriate type for the area, may be communal facilities. Other buildings within the general area may require individual on- or off-street loading areas.

With these principles (developed from a variety of downtown planning studies) as a framework, a general discussion related to parking in the downtown can evolve.

General Parking Considerations

When aggregated information on downtown parking is reviewed, the importance of parking and parking location becomes evident. The generalized data presented below comes from standard traffic engineering references and represents "average" conditions. Since each downtown has its own land use mix, geographic shape and market position, direct comparisons should not be made. However, there are three general areas concerned with parking in the CBD that can be related to an individual city's experience. The first area related to the trip purpose of parkers in the CBD as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
TRIP PURPOSE OF PARKERS

POPULATION	TRIP PURPOSE OF PARKERS (%)			
	WORK	SHOP	BUSINESS	OTHER
10,000	10	40	30	20
50,000	18	30	35	17
100,000	20	27	37	16

Table 1 shows that for cities of under 100,000 population, shopping and business parking represent the majority of parkers in the downtown. Shopper and business parkers represent both high turnover and high pay-off parkers for the downtown, and should be accommodated to the maximum degree possible. On the other hand, parking for work purposes represents a relatively low proportion of total parking in a downtown. The principles presented earlier suggested that this parker group should be given the least attention in terms of location -- and the statistics in Table 1 seem to bear this out.

Table 2 shows the number of parking spaces in the CBD per 1,000 population for various population groups.

TABLE 2

PARKING SPACES PER 1,000 POPULATION

POPULATION	PARKING SPACES
	PER 1,000 POPULATION
10,000	100
25,000	75
50,000	60
75,000	53
100,000	48

The ratio of parking spaces per 1,000 population decreases as population increases for cities up to 100,000 population. This is because of the increasingly important role of transit in larger cities, and because of the opportunity for multiple use of parking space as city size increases. The multiple use of space refers to the fact that as cities become larger, CBD land use functions became more intensively mixed. This permits a parking space to be used for worker parking during the day, and for shopper or entertainment parking in the evenings and on Saturday.

Table 3 indicates the average distances that parkers walk based on trip purpose and population group.

Table 3 indicates that, on balance, the shopping and business trip purpose parkers walk the shortest distance and the work purpose parkers walk the longest distance.

TABLE 3

AVERAGE DISTANCE WALKED

POPULATION GROUP	TRIP PURPOSE			
	SHOP	BUSINESS	WORK	OTHER
10,000-25,000	200'	200'	270'	190'
25,000-50,000	280'	240'	400'	210'
50,000-100,000	350'	290'	410'	260'

+ + + + +

The foregoing was intended to do two things. First, the data presented are meant to underscore the parking principles described and outlined in an earlier section. Second, the data are intended to put the general parking demands and requirements in the downtown in perspective. That is -- to zero in on the major parking needs (shopper and personal business) in the right locations and in the appropriate quantity.

Parking Location

In both the U.S. and Canada, the quantity of parking provided in various CBD's is sufficient in terms of sheer numbers of spaces. The problem most often evident is locational. For example, although enough spaces may be provided, they are either too far away from the land uses generating the trip, or they are difficult to access. It is fully appreciated that large blocks of land that are ideally situated may be difficult (and expensive) to obtain.

However, in smaller cities, where higher proportions of parkers have high turnover trip purposes (shopping and personal business), small and well located lots can serve a substantial number of annual parkers. For example, a well located 60-foot by 100-foot property in the downtown can yield a twenty space "errand" lot. If those spaces turned over, on average, about six times a day -- this small lot could accommodate about 20,000 annual parkers. At an expenditure rate of \$10 to \$15 per trip, the annual sales yield could be in the order of \$200,000 to \$300,000.

This paper presented a number of circulation and parking principles which are based on many downtown studies in cities both large and small. Use these principles as a checklist. For parking to be effective, the appropriate type of parking has to be in the right location. For smaller cities, at least as much attention should be paid to the

development of small, specialized lots as to the development of larger, long term lots.

4.3 Practical Management and Operation of Municipal Parking Facilities

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City of Ottawa

Parking strategy in the central core should reflect the parking needs, community values, and decisions on development. It must meet the economic, environmental, and mobility requirements of the core area as well as the surrounding area, and must be keyed to growth and change.

In the past three decades there has been dramatic change in the core areas. The rapid increase in population since the second World War created demand for living space which pushed urban boundaries into rural areas. Shopping centres drew shoppers away from the established commercial core. Lack of parking in the core was given the major share of the blame for this shift. Municipalities have become increasingly involved in providing parking since the mid 1950's. Now with the changing mobility needs and environmental concerns, careful planning and organization is required to preserve and enhance natural and cultural assets while promoting the material well-being of the people.

To insure that growth will be orderly and in keeping with broad community objectives, the provincial government has encouraged municipalities to adopt an official plan of development. The plan should contain an achievable mix of objectives regarding housing, location of employment, transportation, schools, parks and recreation, shopping and commercial facilities and social and cultural amenities.

The ability to enter, visit and leave the central core safely and efficiently is essential to the core's vitality and growth. The area's economic future depends on the extent to which it retains its accessibility as a place to work, to shop, to transact business and to visit. Maintaining mobility and environmental quality is an important challenge to each municipality. Recent world-wide concerns with the rate of energy consumption and a continuing awareness of the factors which influence the quality of life suggest that future increases in travel demands to the central core in metropolitan areas should be largely met by public transport.

Parking programmes and policies, especially those in the central area, are important elements of the transportation strategy. They can help or hinder overall transportation objectives. They can complement or erode a public transport system.

Traditionally, parking programmes and policies were oriented toward development of systems capable of meeting demands. Often they encouraged the use of the private automobile with an attendant increase in traffic congestion and a decline in the use of public transport, consequences that are somewhat contrary to contemporary attitudes towards personal transportation and environmental quality. They also overlook the reality that parking supply and pricing influence demand in the central area.

Changing attitudes call for a new approach to the parking problem. It no longer can be viewed as an isolated transportation element; rather parking must be considered as part of the overall planning and land development process. Parking policy should be viewed as a tool for achieving broad community development goals and transportation objectives.

The municipality is responsible for the establishment and regulation of the system of public streets - the means of physical

communication. Since the municipality is also responsible for the planning of the city, it must appreciate that parking accommodation is essential to the development and economic welfare of the entire community, not just the central business district. From a land use point of view, the municipality must ensure that the right amount of land is allocated for the right use in the right place. The mobility of the motor vehicle is entirely subject to storage accommodation at its trip origin and destination. Thus, the provision of parking accommodation, both on-street and off-street, is tied to the efficient use of streets. Because the municipality needs to maintain its streets adequately for traffic requirements, it also becomes involved in the provision of off-street parking and the regulation of on-street parking.

In the opinion of such eminent consultants as Sir Robert Matthew and Edmund N. Bacon, the organization of parking facilities should be regarded as a public responsibility and should be planned in relation to access streets and efficient vehicular movement related to areas to be served rather than on a basis of separate building developments. This permits the creation and implementation of a policy which has a careful balance between the number of persons using public transportation. No city can survive without a good public transportation system

In the experience of municipalities, private enterprise is not disposed to provide off-street parking until it is assured of an adequate investment return. Sometimes, this assurance comes after demand has grown beyond any hope of satisfaction. The failure to provide adequate parking in the central core denies access to motor vehicle users; creates the need for "cruising" to find a vacant parking space and frustrates the shopper and the motorist through the loss of mobility on streets clogged with traffic. Poor traffic conditions and inadequate parking

rate among the most important factors of uncontrolled city decentralization.

John Brierley, a noted municipal engineer and town planner, in his book "Parking of Motor Vehicles" states: "It is most important to economic life of a city that traffic of economic importance ie. business and commercial traffic and not commuter traffic, should have efficient parking facilities available at a low fee in the business area. It could be very harmful to the business

of a city if private firms made a profit out of traffic congestion, by charging ridiculously high parking fees. Public parking spaces in the central business areas should be for short term parking only so that several cars may use one space in a day, and it should be made uneconomical for the all-day parker to use these parking spaces. The use of a parking space in a central area public car for all-day parkers is a luxury which no city will be able to afford to allow in the future".

Privately-owned car parks find it more profitable if their customers are all-day parkers, because there is less handling of cars and a smaller staff is required, therefore their charges are usually arranged to encourage the all-day parker . . . Such charges do not encourage the short-term parker - the person who is essential to the business life of a city. . ."

Parking pricing policies for the central core should be equitable to users and should discourage significant amounts of long term parking. Pricing should be reasonable in terms of recovering the major investment required for development and operation of a facility. Parking rates, in general, have favoured the long term (monthly and all-day) parker, while "front loading" the charge for the short term or hourly parker. Such practice is counter-productive in that it tends to over-congest parking which would otherwise be available for the short term (shopper, visitor) parker. The availability

of short term spaces is vital to the economic well-being of the central core.

Monitoring the space occupancy of a parking facility (on-street or off-street) will indicate to the operator when price changes are required. Maximum occupancy in facilities providing the supply for the central core area occurs between the peak hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. These are the hours during which the short term parker require accommodation. The monthly and all-day parker reach the facility before 9 a.m. If, at any time during the peak parking period, the facility is filled, space can be made available for the short-term parker by increasing the all-day and monthly parking rate. Each space freed for short term parkers can, depending upon turnover, accommodate up to five vehicles per day.

In most cities and towns, central area attraction relates closely to increased car use, and revitalization generally depends on better accommodation of the motor vehicle. Thus off-street parking emerges as an important service to the many people who visit downtown daily. It provides a valuable complementary land use. Every city will benefit from provision of convenient, properly planned, downtown off-street parking.

Parking and other downtown uses should through sound "urban design" mutually reinforce each other. Parking facilities should be integrated with other land uses to avoid land fragmentation, to enhance pedestrian continuity and to avoid numerous curb cuts.

Facilities should be sized so as not to place too much parking in one area. Siting plans should recognize street systems and street capacity so that congestion around a site is minimized. Efficiently shaped sites permit designs which minimize internal vehicular travel. If public transport is adequate parking supply should be restricted. Facilities should be located on the perimeter of, rather than penetrate, functional land use areas. Such locations allow traffic to be

intercepted before major congestion points are reached. It also permits greater freedom from hazard for the pedestrian. The facilities should be located within short walking distance of major central core destinations if you hope to have the short term parker patronize them. As a guideline for distance, a shopper will walk 500-800 ft. A worker will walk approximately twice as far. On-street parking should be progressively reduced in the commercial core. Where it is retained, it should be priced competitively with off-street parking facilities, for we must remember that streets were built for the movement of goods and people - not for automobile storage.

Downtown will remain the major urban focal point. Competition among regions may encourage some downtowns to expand, while others grow more slowly or even diminish. Because the historical development of the central city has been a major factor in the size and character of its downtown even where new regional centres are developed, they will probably not achieve the intensity found in most older cores.

Where redevelopment is being considered there are several basic steps to be taken. The business community should form an association and decide what changes should be made. Plans must be discussed with local government and its support enlisted. Then a comprehensive study should be undertaken so that planning decisions can be made which are based on an objective analysis of the activities that are likely to find competitive advantage in a downtown environment. The study must answer such questions as:

1. What parking conditions exist ?
2. What effect will current redevelopment proposals have ?
3. What will future parking needs be ?
4. Will any change to parking zoning standards be required ?
5. Where and in what amounts should parking be provided ?
6. How will the programme be financed ?

7. What bylaws will be required?

In smaller cities, curb space provides most parking space. As the city grows, these spaces are usually supplemented with surface parking lots or garages. Garage facilities have been relatively rare until cities reach an undesirable situation in traffic stagnation. In larger cities, garages provide only about one-quarter of the parking spaces. Many parking facilities have been constructed to serve department stores, office buildings and banks. In older communities parking often has been undertaken by public agencies mainly because of land assembly. The Province of Ontario early recognized the need for public involvement in the provision of off-street parking and included the following section in the Ontario Municipal Act (R.S.O. 1970, Chapter 284, Section 352, Paragraph 72 (a) to (h)):

"(f) Such reserve fund shall be applied:

- (i) firstly, for the payment of interest and principal falling due in each year in respect of any debentures issued for the purpose of this paragraph, and
- (ii) secondly, for the acquisition, establishment, laying out or improvement of additional parking lots or facilities, and
- (iii) thirdly, for such other purposes as the council may approve."

Public agencies and private enterprise can work together in providing downtown parking. Moreover, there are a great many opportunities for parking developments by private enterprise as "combined facilities", adjuncts to business developments, integral parts of renewal projects, or as purely speculative ventures. Return on investment over the first five years is minimal and, in fact, a multi-level facility frequently is in a

deficit position at the end of the first five years. This is only true when the multi-level structure is free standing and supported solely through parking. Where a combined facility is constructed, demand is created in the complex thereby increasing occupancy.

A rational approach to the development and management of parking will include:

1. distribution of parking facilities in relation to:
 - (a) land-use intensity;
 - (b) demonstrated parking needs;
 - (c) available road access capacity.
2. recognition of the individual short-term and long-term parking requirement of individual sub-areas, thereby leading to a differentiated policy regarding the provision and prohibition of parking.
3. encouragement of short term parking through supply, location, design and pricing.
4. progressive elimination of on-street parking, surface lots and obsolete (poorly designed and/or located) garage facilities as new facilities are built.
5. enforcement of curb parking regulations to minimize illegal and overtime parking.
6. adaptation of curb parking rate structures which more fully recognize the value of curb spaces.
7. encouragement, perhaps, requirement that new parking facilities provide ground level commercial uses, ie. preclude construction of new "free standing" garages.

These policy directions imply a need for new institutional mechanisms, particularly on the municipal level. Control measures are essential for the supply and pricing of

parking to have a significant affect on investment decisions.

There is a need for a single municipal parking agency to exercise control over public and private parking. It should have ability to regulate rates and operating procedures - at least for municipal facilities; license private garages and lots; review parking designs, and plan and design new facilities including site acquisition. Licensing could be conditional upon conformity with requirements for capacity, performance standards, including access and, ideally, rate structures.

What do you want your parking policy to achieve for your municipality? To reduce on-street congestion and minimize intrusion of the automobile and parking in the central core, the parking supply should be stabilized with parking prices established to encourage the short term parker.

Parking management policies must complement the overall growth objectives and transportation goals. In the past, such policies have generally followed demand-satisfaction programmes, should be responsive to the need to enhance environmental quality and conserve energy resources. In being responsive, parking management policies can play a meaningful role in achieving goals related to healthful air and energy resource conservation.

It is important that the community understand and support the policies. To achieve this, the public, the business community and the government agencies must work together to establish the policies and agree on the methods used to carry them through.

4.4 Downtown Parking: Technical Issues

Victor Bridle,
Traffic Coordinator,
City of Kitchener

The 1950's and 60's were periods of concentrated road development in the Province of Ontario. It was the era of traffic studies which were in great demand by urban areas. They were subsidized by the province, and consultants in the field were very busy. Data on traffic volumes was collected, analyzed, factorized, projected and computerized. The results proved beyond a doubt that the devil on wheels was about to destroy us or at best, cost a pile of dough to contain. With all these neatly indexed facts, road construction was underway; the era of the expressway and high performance arterial routes was here, and very necessary. Our road facilities at that time were inadequate and the devil was already on the move. Vehicle registrations were increasing and the dream of a car for every family increased to two or even three.

Traffic studies did attempt to include some facts and figures on transit and parking but, at best, they were sketchy. The prime theme was to get the devil where he was going as fast and safe as possible. It was like taking aspirins one or two will cure the pain; too many will make your tummy upset and your ears ring. Part of the side effects fell on the downtown business districts. Traffic engineers removed parking; the parking meter mortality rate on main streets was something else again. Computerized signals in some towns sped the devil straight through,

and when he passed the city limits sign, he still had the buck he intended to spend in his pocket. Parking in smaller cities fell behind the demand; on street parking was expensive to replace. There was no subsidy to ease the burden. With the parking shortage at convenient downtown locations, the devil sped on the improved highway system to the plazas where free parking and undercover shopping was just the ticket. Pedestrian types, also got the urge, and transit being a demand and supply service, used the improved road systems to take the people to the plaza that was offering free parking and undercover shopping which was slowly eating the heart out of our downtown way of life.

However not all is black; environmentalists and other interested parties entered the picture, a little drastically perhaps, and the pendulum swung the other way. Transit was in and major road construction was out. It became difficult, almost impossible, to build an expressway; cutting down a tree became a major crime. Oil prices went up by leaps and bounds. Downtown merchants started to fight the removal of on-street parking. In fact, some demanded and got lost parking reinstated. City purse strings were eased, and limited, but new parking facilities were provided. Transit systems were subsidized by the province and transit operators were then able to provide better service and expand their routes. Many smaller cities found that with better service, transit riders found they had really wanted to go downtown all the time.

We have now reached a point where many downtown areas are becoming more attractive. Part of the challenge to assist in maintaining the momentum lies with the transportation triangle: parking, traffic and transit which are all part of the people moving industry. They should be an integral part of one function. In Kitchener we have found we can convince transit management to provide the odd far side bus stop at main intersections -

with the help of our transportation director who heads parking, traffic and transit.

Developing Parking in the Downtown

Points for Consideration:

1. Parking structures are not necessarily the answer to all problems because they are expensive and there is no subsidy. Also, they must be carefully located with access to major traffic flows. They should be located at the entrance to the downtown area, because you cannot erect a large facility at one end of the town and expect the other end to survive.
2. Smaller units, strategically placed, can fill the needs of a smaller town better than one large facility.
3. On street parking is convenient and cheap to provide. It can be successfully operated on the fringe of the core area, even on some residential streets. It provides a good source of medium term parking.
4. In towns where main street parking, especially angle parking, is in jeopardy of being removed, plan now for its replacement. There are several effective methods of providing the same facilities which have almost equal convenience. Side streets can be developed at intersections with the main street. A 66-foot road allowance, if developed with sidewalks on both sides, leaves sufficient room to provide angle parking on one side and parallel on the other. These spaces can be controlled by parking meters. Lanes to the rear of the stores can also be created for parking by buying the flanking properties and developing parking using the lane as part of the capsule. Store owners often take advantage of rear parking and often provide direct entrances to their stores. The clean up of unsightly rear lanes also occurs.

5. Smaller, off-street, metered parking areas can be developed on lands which are city-owned or leased. These lots need not be large because a dozen meters located where the demand is highest will do better than 50 where the walking distance exceeds 700 ft. Meters are easy to maintain; requiring no costly gate equipment or attendant services. The parking areas can be partially landscaped to fit into the many downtown beautification programs. These areas can be developed at minimal cost, minor grading and paving is usually all that is required, plus of course, the cost of the parking meters and they can be reused should the lands be required for other purposes.
6. Enforcement of any metered parking area, either on or off street, is essential. Good turnovers in short term metered parking facilities cannot be achieved without this aid. The enforcement policy should be firm and fair but should not be so aggressive as to generate resentment from the public. The whole idea is to ensure that short term metered areas fulfill their intended use.
7. The provision of long term parking is a problem facing many urban areas and will eventually reach smaller cities. In Kitchener by 1980 we shall be some 1,300 spaces short of this facility. Its development by private enterprise is unlikely. The cost to the city to provide this parking at say \$4,500 per space is beyond our capabilities. The rent per space to cover the cost would be about \$40.00 per month which is a little steep.
8. The provision of parking must be balanced with transit availability. To provide uneconomic parking at city cost means we are subsidizing the driver not to ride on the already subsidized transit system. At the same time if parking is drastically reduced then

transit could not cope with the increased ridership without large capital expenditures. The answer seems to be middle-of-the-road solution, especially for long term parking. The desired effect may be achieved by filling part of the parking demand and gradually building up the transit capacity. Traffic operations also enter into this balance. The lack of parking in the downtown does not necessarily mean less traffic. Frustrated drivers searching for too few parking spaces are a hazard to other road users. The violations of parking and stopping regulations increase with the resulting traffic congestion.

Traffic

The movement of traffic in a downtown area must be achieved without stripping parking.

- (a) The best possible use must be made of the existing pavement.
- (b) With properly timed signals, provision of separate turning lanes, the prohibition of some movements and the creation of one-way systems, it is possible to increase street capacity and levels of services. Care must be taken that restrictive traffic control practices do not become irksome to the driver because making it difficult to get to a parking spot is almost as bad as not providing it in the first place.
- (c) Movement of pedestrians with the least possible delay is of paramount importance. No one likes to stand around in February for long periods waiting for a walk signal. Traffic volumes, although important in signal timing, must be blended with what is happening at the corner. Get out and look at it before a timing change and go back afterwards as well.

Transit

(a) If the street pattern allows, bring transit close to the business district but not necessarily in the centre. A transit rider will walk short distances just like the parker.

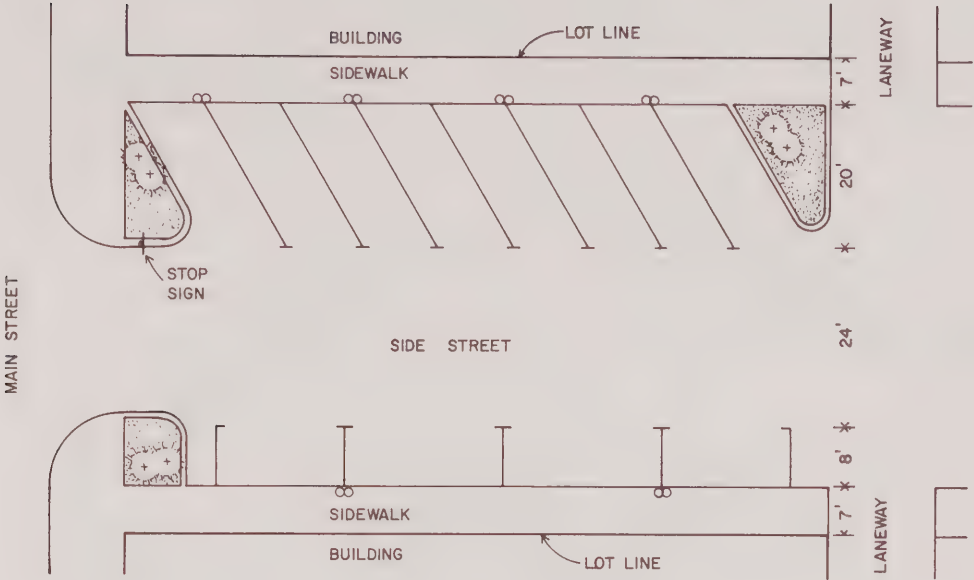
(b) Main streets are slow moving at best. This plays havoc with transit schedules, results in poorer service and increases the need for additional buses on the route. A fast ride from home to the edge of town is no good if it takes longer again to get to the core.

(c) Provide good loading and unloading facilities and create bus bays. These are good for traffic movement as well. Passenger comfort in the form of shelters is not a luxury but a necessity.

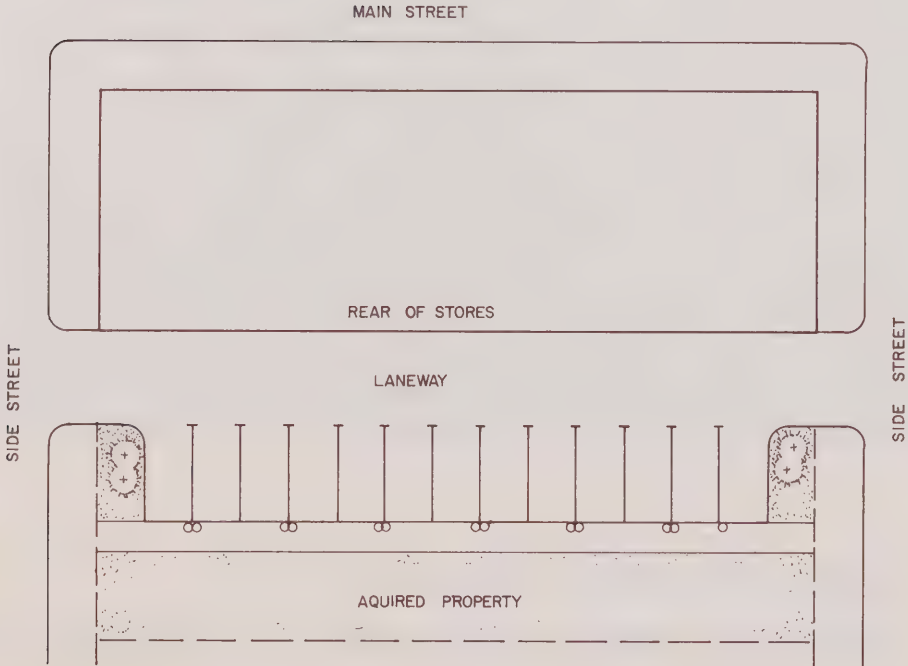
Conclusion:

There is a delicate balance between traffic, parking and transit. To maintain this balance more than interdepartmental co-operation is required. There should be one body responsible for each area and to the administration. When planning to solve present and future parking, traffic and transit needs, remember each city is different.

SIDESTREET PARKING DEVELOPMENT



LANEWAY TREATMENT FOR DOWNTOWN PARKING



CITY OF KITCHENER DOWNTOWN PARKING





The business community and
the business improvement area concept

5

5.1 Canadian Chartered Banks: Their Role
in the Business Improvement Concept

A.R. Cooper,
Canadian Bankers Association

Participation in downtown improvement programs usually takes two forms:

- 1) Participation in business development and beautification schemes;
- 2) Capital investment and or improvement of existing premises.

I would like to briefly outline the bank's involvement in each area and conclude with some observations and concerns.

Firstly, participation in business development schemes has become increasingly popular across Canada and, with nearly 7300 branches, it is highly improbable that there exists a plan that does not include at least one chartered bank. For the most part there appears to be positive results from these programs, particularly for retailers in the core areas.

In principle the chartered banks support the concept of a unified effort to maintain the vitality of downtown core areas in Canadian cities. After all banks do have a sizable vested interest in the well being of these areas through their business relationships with the merchants and citizens plus significant real estate investments in the core areas of Canadian cities.

Whether or not a bank invests capital in a particular area and the amount of that investment is a very serious business decision based primarily on the potential profitability of the particular branch. In the case of renovation or relocation it is usually the proven profitability that is the key factor. In other words, banks operate no differently than any other prudent business operation.

As a general rule banks build top quality structures, making every effort to ensure their branches are aesthetically compatible with other properties in the vicinity. Branch banks are also among the best maintained structures in most municipalities.

The banks have good reasons for their efforts in this area:

- 1) Banks attempt to cut down on long term occupancy costs by building higher quality structures;
- 2) preventive maintenance programs avoid costly repairs;
- 3) keen competition and public relations make it compulsory for banks to provide attractive premises.

The charges to the chartered banks for beautification, business development and expanded parking programs has climbed into the millions of dollars annually as there has been a tremendous proliferation of schemes in recent years.

From a cost point of view there are some specific concerns.

In Ontario, a number of municipalities are incorrectly calculating the Business Improvement Area charges using the business assessment rather than the realty assessment. As a result, the banks pay at least twice their share due to their business assessment percentage being at 75% as opposed to the 30% applicable to most retailers.

In some municipalities it is evident that major re-development is the only solution to a dying core area, yet those who invest are often penalized. For example, in a medium sized Ontario city, two chartered banks showed their confidence in the core area by developing two office - retail complexes while little else was done by other property owners to even improve

their existing premises. The others did however decide to implement a beautification program and the banks in question payed substantially more than anyone else due to the large capital investment and resulting assessment.

Wit the growing number of municipalities entering into improvement programs there is concern that many plans are not well enough prepared. In depth study is needed to show participants what is realistically required to turn around a dying core area. When a regional shopping centre is built on the periphery of a downtown core area, a few flower pots will not revitalize the area. Because of short sightedness we have seen enthusiasm disappear rapidly and plans die after only one year.

There are circumstances under which a bank finds itself in conflict with the municipality when attempting to improve its premises.

An example occurred recently in a medium sized town in which the merchants agreed to upgrade their individual premises in conjunction with a Business Improvement Program. The bank in question made application to the local municipality for a permit allowing the bank to sand blast the exterior and make some interior improvements at a cost of approximately \$25,000. The municipality refused to issue the permit unless the bank:

- a) re-wired the entire premises
- b) changed all exterior doors
- c) installed a sprinkler system
- d) acquired additional parking facilities

The cost of these conditions was estimated at \$175,000, plus temporary premises would be required.

It must be remembered that banks are not indepletable sources of funds and their motivation for locating, improving or participating will depend on business considerations.

In conclusion, clear, concise plans that have been well thought out and present a realistic picture respecting costs and direction will most probably ensure the full co-operation of the canadian chartered banks.

5.2 Business Improvement Areas:

Developing a Long Range Plan

Harold Nash,
Businessman,
City of St. Catharines

Firstly, without attempting to arrange them in any order, let's list the things that should receive consideration by the newly formed Board of Management. These might include: developing an identity; providing some form of communication with the membership; a promotional package; establishing a working arrangement, or at least a liason, with local government officials; identifying any particular problems, (which probably will revolve around parking, traffic or blight) and attempting to find solutions; and others that will be of particular interest to that BIA. An imposing list, which when taken in its entirety, can assume enormous proportions. But let's look at the list again and start putting it into some order. May I suggest that the first consideration should be the establishment of some goals - something that really can't be done until you've identified your problems. So, put in simple terms, in order to develop a reasonable program of action, it will be necessary to take the steps of firstly, identifying the problems, secondly, establishing some goals for the organization, and lastly, developing a program on short and long term basis to achieve those goals. Simple, isn't it!

It has been said "although it is simple enough to point out the obvious problems and say they should be corrected, it is considerably more difficult to propose and execute corrective measures." I believe that statement to be true - and if it is true, how can we tackle the problem of

revitalizing our downtown? In my estimation, it can only be accomplished with the assistance of professionally trained people. And that can take many different forms - such as: professional staff of a municipality; interest and co-operation of a local university; volunteer professional services of members of the BIA; or paying for the services on a contract basis. I think you have to go through the exercise of establishing a plan of action to cover a predetermined period to time, using whatever method best suits your circumstances. But without a plan, your efforts will be fragmented, often ineffective, with the expenditure of funds resulting in poor return.

Which I think now brings me to the point of relating the St. Catharines experience regarding its operations in its formulative year. When the St. Catharines BIA was formed in the spring of 1973, its Board of Management determined it did not have the expertise available to develop a reasonable program, so it hired the services of a downtown consultant. After engaging the consultant, it was determined that the preparation of the plan would take some time. Rather than do nothing in that interim, the Board decided to continue with the limited promotional efforts of the old voluntary organization which the BIA replaced. The budget for the first year amounted to \$25,000, paying for the promotional efforts, as well as the services of our consultant. The work of the organization was carried out by the appointed Board, assisted where necessary by the consultant. In July, 1974, the consultant presented his report entitled "City Core Work Program: A Guide to Action."

I would like to present the details of that report and the results achieved to date.

The basic assignment was to formulate goals and objectives for the future development and functioning of the St. Catharines BIA and then to translate these goals and

objectives into a realistic and attainable immediate action and five-year work program. After analysis and review, five major goals were identified.

1. City Core must pursue an action-oriented leadership role in determining future development of the CBD and policy relating to it.
2. Improvement of the existing downtown parking system is primary.
3. The image of downtown should be built upon in two ways - the physical appearance and its promotional characteristics.
4. Expand the retail base of the area to provide a wider and improved retail mix.
5. Transportation to and within the CBD in general and CBD traffic in particular should be improved.

With these goals determined, a five-year program design was established with specific programs for the first two years detailed.

The Program -

Demonstration Block

It designated the highest pedestrian traffic block for a demonstration project where sidewalk and other environmental improvements could be made. The goal here was to make major improvements to the physical environment and to show that City Core was active and involved in a constructive physical sense. The design has been completed and a phasing for the project established. Approvals were received for the first stage and it has been completed. Phase 2 has been delayed because of more physical changes in the block, but monies have been set aside for the building of the next phase in 1978.

Lower Level Parking Lot

To construct a multi-level parking facility

in the area behind the main shopping street which is in a valley below the street. The goal here was to increase the supply of parking and possibly encourage the redevelopment of the side of the street fronting this area. Subsequent to this project, the City undertook the building of a multi-level garage on an existing parking lot, with better access to the retail area than the originally proposed site. The parking supply was increased by 400 cars net, resulting in the lowering of this project on the priority list. Further consideration will be given to this area when Highway 406 is completed, because this Highway will affect the land area available for development.

Package Delivery Scheme

To develop a program for the delivery of packages to designated areas at major parking facilities. The goal here was to make shopping easier and more pleasant. But investigation of this project indicated the cost/benefit factor made it uneconomical to undertake.

Preparation of a CBD Plan

To work with municipal officials to produce a complete and realistic secondary plan for the CBD. The goal in this instance was to initiate and influence the completion of a secondary plan. We submitted to city council a document, prepared for us by our consultant, at our expense, entitled "Core Area Concept Plan." We feel this has prompted council to give the highest priority in its Planning Department to the completion of a secondary plan for the CBD of St. Catharines. This will be a most important document if we are to establish an environment in which private enterprise might consider our city for development opportunities, as well as to qualify for assistance by the Ministry of Housing under its revitalizing Ontario's downtowns program.

Downtown Direction Program

To design, fabricate and install a series of directional signs indicating routes to the CBD. The goal here was to facilitate

movement into the CBD by clearly marking the routes. Because of our excellent relationship with the Regional Municipality of Niagara, the government responsible for the main road system in our city, we were able to get them to agree that it was their responsibility to provide these signs. They designed, built, installed, and maintain the signs so that the project was successfully completed at no cost to the BIA.

The consultants made other recommendations regarding rehabilitation, beautification, traffic and the boundaries of our BIA. They also suggested some organizational changes to incorporate a committee structure and the hiring of a paid administrator. We have installed these last two recommendations, although I realize that many BIA will not have the funds to hire staff as well as undertake an expensive program. May I say that our initial budget was \$25,000 as I previously mentioned - our present budget is over \$130,000. We have 550 members and are considering a further enlargement of our boundaries.

The last recommendation in our work program dealt with Promotion and Marketing. It suggested the establishment of an intensive, co-ordinated, multi-faceted marketing and promotional campaign for all activities. The consultant was prepared to undertake this project on our behalf, but we determined that a local full-service advertising agency would best serve our needs because New York is just too far away when you have a problem to be solved. We chose Russell T. Kelly of Hamilton, who prepared a marketing and advertising plan. It included the development of our logo and stationery, our newsletter, a parking stamp promotional kit as well as other promotional activities.

We have many accomplishments to be proud of, but we have really but scratched the surface. As a result, city core was instrumental in influencing city council to establish a Mayor's Task Force on Downtown Revitalization. The well-being of

any city centre cannot only be the responsibility of the business community. It needs a clear commitment on the part of the elected officials and the citizens at large, as well as those who are most directly affected, before the kind of action necessary to really to the job will be forthcoming.



Developing a plan
for the downtown area

6

6.1 Principles of a Downtown Plan

M.V. Jones,
Planning Consultant,
Toronto

As I see it, there are four basic components involved in not only developing a plan for a community's downtown area but also assuring its implementation. They are:

1. There must be a demonstrated will on the part of the community and its leaders to place priority value on the preservation and enhancement of its central area. Without this component, all others will have only academic interest, if that.

I say this is a 'plan' component since all planning assumes that there is a consensus on goals. It follows that no amount of technical planning can substitute for policy agreed on by the whole community; a plan has little or no value unless it is capable of implementation.

In many of our urban areas, there are three main conflicts to be overcome in arriving at agreed goals if a successful 'plan' is to be prepared and carried out. One is the conflict between jurisdictions. The typical case is one where the downtown is declining as a commercial centre either relatively or absolutely or both, while new competing commercial areas (the shopping centre) are developing on the edge of the urban area in another municipality. We do not have adequate means of overcoming this problem and the plan must, therefore, either accept that the downtown cannot be the dominant 'central place' in a commercial sense or try to exert sufficient power to reverse the situation.

The second conflict is that between rational land use planning and the municipal tax system. Most municipal councils cannot resist the benefits of approving new non-residential uses anywhere. The costs are often

not perceived until much later when the central area commercial tax base begins to fall.

The third conflict results from the nature of the political structure and attitudes. With or without a ward system, members of council are not elected with any special weights to the central area as opposed to any other part of the municipality. Downtown does not have a 'constituency' wherein its role as 'common-to-the-whole' is given recognition. Similarly, the public as a whole rarely 'votes' for the downtown; in a ward system it cannot - without wards there has to be a 'downtown platform' (vs. either an 'anti-downtown' or neutral posture) on the part of the prospective governors. Part of this same conflict is the widespread notion that allocating special attention and resources to downtown is giving special privilege to the business community and is considered unsavory, if not improper.

In short, there are serious barriers to developing a consensus, a demonstrated will to adopt the downtown as lodestone of public policy.

2. There must be no gap between the expression of the goal and knowledge of the realistic possibilities (and probabilities) of achieving that goal.

This is another way of saying that planning, as noted earlier, consists of knowing how to achieve stated ends. In most cases, we can only be accurate by coincidence since the future has a habit of not conforming to our expectations. But we must do our best; the continuous up-dating of our hypothesis is the only measure of our certainty.

Among the many varying factors the 'plan' must be based on are:

- the identification of the role of the downtown through study of the economy

of the region, its past and analysed future. We have to know, as best we can, what scale and nature the downtown can achieve - all other things being equal.

- the number, composition and location of population both now and in the near term future.
 - income and expenditure patterns.
 - the physical and functional state of the present downtown.
 - the need for unique public and institutional uses.
 - the nature and amount of feasible private investment.
 - an urban design framework conducive to continued strength of the existing fabric and the integration of new additional uses.
 - a financial plan and program feasible in both monetary and political terms.
 - a workable infrastructure system geared to making full use of present investment and minimal future investment.
 - an implementaion scheme in keeping with the nature and scope of the planned accomplishments.
3. There must be, in addition to a concensus on goals and competently devised methodology, a demonstrated ability to manage a complex endeavour.

This is particularly significant for small and medium sized communities where traditionally, administration has been limited to a narrow and well defined number of tasks. Planning to administer a complex planning and development program is just as important as devising a sound program in the first place.

The Province of Ontario has recognized this need in its Revitalization Administration Guide wherein the cost of administration are an acceptable part of the Province's loan.

It should not be assumed, however, that all initiative will, or has to come from the municipal council. There are many cases where the business community has taken the lead and maintained it. In fact, such private sector leadership is essential since downtown planning (leading to continuous renewal) requires a complete partnership of public and private effort.

4. If there is a fourth component, it could be expressed as: Commitment of others - notably other levels of government.

Planning for the core area of small and medium sized communities and effective implementation in any condition other than a buoyant economy requires policy and monetary support greater than local resources can provide. The federal government abandoned its participation in 1968. Most, if not all provinces, withdrew at the same time since the 1964-68 downtown renewal program was a shared operation. It will depend on what value the provinces placed on vibrant central areas as to whether they become involved again. There is some indication that interest is being renewed in the renewal of our traditional 'heart'!

6.2 Mobilizing a Revitalization Plan for the Small and/or Medium Sized Community

D. Johnston,
Director of Planning,
County of Victoria

I would like to briefly describe the situation that we face in Victoria County. As Planning Director for a country with 18 municipalities, my department has, over the past couple of years, become involved in a variety of int-

eresting and sometimes controversial projects. The county is currently in the process of preparing a county-wide official plan.

While the county official plan has been under preparation we have been providing ongoing planning advisory services to those municipalities requesting same.

We are involved in a number of special studies one of which is the Lindsay Revitalization Study.

The Town of Lindsay with a population of slightly better than 13,000 people is the "Big Apple" of Victoria County. The town has its own local official plan in conjunction with the Township of Ops which surrounds Lindsay. The plan has been in place for a number of years with final approval from the ministry in 1976. The local official plan recognized certain problems in the downtown area and identified it as a special study area. It was envisaged that more detailed policies to cover the downtown would be introduced by way of amendment to the local official plan.

The announcement of the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program rekindled a desire on the part of town council as I am sure it did in many other small and medium sized centres, to establish a detailed policy statement and development plan for the downtown area. It was at this point that the county first became involved in a wide-spread revitalization effort. Up to this point we had been involved in a Business Improvement Area which centred on improving certain visual and pedestrian aspects of the main street. (i.e. widen sidewalks and street furniture). This program was helpful but was not perceived as adequate by many people.

In an attempt to assist Lindsay council focus on what it was trying to achieve several letters were written from our Planning Department to the council. These letters were then discussed with both the planning board and council. Our early

letters tried to focus in on the following questions:

1. What should be the role(s) of the Lindsay downtown?
2. What is the present role(s) of the downtown?
3. If there are differences between the first two answers is there a significant enough difference to justify action by council?
4. If council does take action what should be done?
5. If action is taken what special help will be required?
6. If action is taken what special interest groups should be involved?

Some of these questions may seem to be rather simplistic and have, from previous council action, been answered. (ie. the town's commitment to an official plan amendment). However, these basic questions did provide an opportunity to review with council their commitment to the downtown. Discussions proved to be very interesting, exposing a number of concerns and degrees of commitment. The discussion of roles help councillors perceive more than one obvious role as a retail centre. I think it is fair to say that it was the concensus of council that the downtown had a multi-functional role and that it was desirable to strengthen this multi-functional aspect.

A quick review of the Lindsay downtown revealed that there was a strong financial role. More specifically, there were no financial lending institutions located outside of the downtown area.

It was also recognized that the downtown area served an important cultural role. Both the movie theatre and the Kawartha summer theatre, which is a major tourist attraction, are located within the downtown area.

A residential component was also identified as an important role. The use of perceived roles is, I believe, a more useful concept in the case of Lindsay and perhaps other centres than detailed goals and objectives. In discussing the issues in the downtown area the use of roles was more easily identified with, by council and interest groups, than goals and objectives. It is my hope that once we are further along in some of our studies that common traits within each role will emerge and as such, more meaningful goals and objectives can be formulated.

The use of roles versus goals and objectives does run the risk of further polarizing various interest groups. I am convinced that any council which is serious about a revitalization plan must look at the function or roles that the downtown should possess. A consensus on the present role or function of the downtown is essential if there is to be any progress in mobilizing a program.

A consideration of all present roles and possible future roles also avoids a phenomena common in many municipalities that I shall refer to as "programmed vision." Programmed vision leads to solutions that centre on senior government programs that provide the bulk of funding instead of perhaps solving the real problems of the downtown. It may well be that a senior government program does not meet the needs of a particular downtown. While it is a fact of life that programs will be devised and implemented in a manner to obtain favourable grants or loans, a clear perception of roles for the downtown will help to focus energies on what should be done as opposed to what will yield the largest contribution from senior levels of government.

Once the general present and possible future roles have been established council faces the decision as to whether the situation merits action. If action is taken to what extent should council become involved?

The Town of Lindsay council decided that action was required and that it was willing to participate fully in the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program. The county was asked if the planning department was willing to participate in the venture, as Lindsay is the county seat and our major centre of population. We answered in the affirmative indicating what information we, at the county level, were willing to provide. We also indicated where we felt additional expertise would be required. As part of our services to the town, we drafted terms of reference for the additional studies, which were to be sent to consultants. The terms of reference provided council an opportunity to directly effect the nature and scope of any work to be done. In discussing the terms of reference we emphasized that the program should be capable of being implemented and should be conveyed as such in the terms of reference. The terms of reference also provided council an opportunity to review in a more comprehensive fashion the studies that had already been done or that were currently under-way which could be utilized in any comprehensive study.

We felt that there were several studies currently underway or completed that could be used as an information base for any revitalization study. We also identified several sources of information that could be utilized.

Of particular note. A transportation study primarily dealing with vehicular traffic in the downtown was underway. The vehicular studies would identify problems in obtaining proper access to the downtown. For example - turning lanes might be instituted, changes on street parking, better phasing of traffic signals, installation of new signals and the possibility, feasibility and desirability of certain streets being one way would be examined.

We felt that circulation of vehicular traffic was important but not broad enough.

In particular, we felt that the transportation study would have to deal in some detail with pedestrian flows , existing and possible future pathways.

Linked to the pedestrian flows is the location of parking areas. The town had conducted a parking study to identify the number of parking spaces both private and public that were available in the downtown area. We felt that this would have to be taken one step further and some time would have to be spent determining usage of these parking areas. It is all well and good to provide 500 parking spaces but if they are in the wrong location it does very little to attract more shoppers to the downtown. The pedestrian links from shopping to parking areas are extremely important.

As part of the parking analysis consideration would be given to varying parking fees in different segments of the town. This has been tried on an experimental basis and found effective in keeping all day parking from prime locations in the downtown.

The urban renewal study which was carried out sometime ago identified condition and age of certain structures and buildings in the downtown. We felt that this study would have to be updated but served as a good base from which to start.

The important aspect in measuring impact of any revitalization program is the extent to which assessment will be affected within the study area. As such, it is critical that an accurate picture of the current assessment base within the study area can be drawn. We felt it was also desirable to categorize office space as to condition and total amounts.

We further felt that it would be a good idea to identify existing open space areas and relate those to possible development options in the downtown area. Supportive of the open space study would be the identification

of historic buildings and landmarks. As part of the county planning program an economic base study for the county with particular attention to the Town of Lindsay was undertaken. The study identified major economic activity and employment opportunities.

As a follow-up to this study probably the single most important study was conducted. During this past summer, we collected detailed information on existing commercial square footages for the entire county (retail, wholesale, storage, classified). In addition, to the commercial base, over one thousand shopper surveys were conducted within the county with over six hundred in Lindsay. While the study was primarily designed to assess area wide trends we were aware of the towns possible involvement in revitalization and as such, we collected the information in such a fashion that the appropriate segments could be readily assembled as background material for any revitalization study. The town and county have agreed that the commercial market study will be supplied through the county. It is our hope that the study will establish whether additional commercial space is required and if so, the general nature.

It was hoped that the terms of reference including the existing studies and those underway combined with the administration guidelines on downtown revitalization would provide sufficient guidance to any consultant preparing an estimate of the cost of preparation of the official plan amendment and/or revitalization study. I feel that the drafting of such terms of reference helped council appreciate what is being sought and also simplifies the task for a consultant who is asked to submit a tender on such a project.

While the terms of reference were being prepared we were also engaged in discussion with council as to what vehicle should be used to ensure proper interest group presentation in any planning exercise.

Any council involved in a revitalization program should give considerable thought to what special interest groups should be involved and the reporting relationship of any special purpose body to planning board and council.

If committees are established without careful consideration it is likely that it will be too large and cumbersome to be effective, it is also quite likely that not all interest groups that should be present, will be presented.

In the case of Lindsay we recommended that a two-level (technical-political), core committee be established. The technical component would be there to provide information while the political element would be responsible for the policies in the revitalization plan. In order to ensure the planning board and council were fully aware of the activities of the core committee we recommended that there be representation from both planning board and council on the committee. We further recommended that one representative from each interest group be selected to sit on the core committee. (ie. financial, business community, chamber of commerce).

Based on both my municipal and provincial experience I feel quite strongly that the larger a committee becomes the more difficult it is to get things accomplished. On the other hand, if the committee does not represent the view of the study area it is unlikely that the plan will ever be accepted. Trying to strike a proper balance is perhaps the most difficult task that the local council faces. It is my understanding that such a group is presently being formulated.

I have not spent a great deal of time discussing the details taken into account in the various background reports with the exception of the commercial base study. This was deliberate as I felt that my remarks on the logistics of mobilizing a plan would be of greater interest to you.

Before closing, I would like to take this opportunity to share a couple of thoughts on the Ontario revitalization program for downtowns and how it interfaces with local needs. Most municipalities less than 125,000 or certainly those less than 25,000 have a different approach to dealing with problems than perhaps perceived at the provincial level. When a local council decides something should be done all possible senior government funding is evaluated. A phenomena sometime referred to as "piggy-backitis" often occurs where the local municipality tries to incorporate as many funding programs as possible towards the project. As stated earlier, unless the local council has a clear perception of what is desired, the doubling up on funding can lead to programmed vision which may not have the desired effect. If there is one piece of advice I could impart with provincial officials it is to please make your programs flexible with particular attention to the inter-relationship of one program to another. Such an approach would be more in line with the municipal decision making process.

It is clear that to date most of the redevelopment programs are focusing on the commercial component. With such a narrow focus I believe that one runs the risk of creating unhealthy imbalances. While any redevelopment strategy should rest in local hands, I believe that senior levels of government should give closer attention to where government offices or buildings are located, in such a way as to complement the core areas.

I also believe that perhaps further attention should be given in the revitalization program to the development of cultural and historical aspects of a downtown. This is an often forgotten aspect to the downtown that means a great deal to local residents. (i.e. Wintario grant 10% bonus for locations in CBD area).

In summarizing what I have said, my message

to local municipalities is to identify the role(s) for your downtown and study them carefully avoiding the temptation of programmed vision. To provincial and sometime federal officials I say, design your grant and loan programs as flexible as possible with careful attention to the interrelationship of one program to another.

6.3 Town of Elmira: Case Study

Don Brox,
Businessman,
Town of Elmira

Re-development, a word that is becoming more and more a part of our daily vocabulary, especially with those of us who are directly involved in the business community in the downtown area of our towns and cities.

I come from a small town with a population of a mere 6600 people. Our town is in the heart of one of the richest farming areas in Ontario. We have a rural trading area of about 10,000 people of which about one-third belong to the Mennonite faith. We are located just 10 miles north of Kitchener-Waterloo, and 15 miles west of Guelph. We have a population of more than 400,000 people within a radius of 20 miles of Elmira and a population of over 3,000,000 within a radius of 85 miles.

So - what does this say to you in terms of the survival of the business community in our small town and how does it relate to re-development. We have a class A -100 store plus indoor shopping mall within a 30 minute drive of Elmira. Another one is presently under construction which is within a 10 minute drive. Both these shopping centres are located on a major, limited access highway which links Elmira and Kitchener-Waterloo. The pessimist would say: no amount of re-development in a little town like Elmira could ever hope to compete with that type of situation and that pessimist would probably be right.

Okay then - why am I here? Well simply because I believe re-development is just as important in a small community like Elmira as it is in a large urban area. I believe that the business communities in the smaller towns will virtually disappear in the next few years unless there is a positive initiative on the part of those directly involved, and the local and provincial government as well. It has to be a joint effort but I believe the private sector must take the first steps before any help can be or should be expected from any level of government. There must be a grass roots swell from the business community itself before any meaningful re-development can take place.

Why do we need re-development in smaller cities and towns, especially when they are surrounded by easily accessible large urban shopping centres - quite simply - SURVIVAL of the community as a whole. For as the commercial core goes, so goes the town. There are plenty of examples to back up this statement.

Next question - How do we go about this? We can't possibly offer what a large urban area offers, so we look at our natural resources and capitalize on them.

Natural Resources

What I am saying is that each one of us in our individual communities must look at what we have going for us and then take it and use it to our advantage. In other words make the best use of those things which are natural to the area. For example, we are in the heart of Ontario's Pennsylvania Dutch settlement. We are very careful not to exploit the Mennonite community. But it's there, so we make the best use of it. It also provides us with a theme to use in all our planning and we've done so in the Village.

We've also played up on the nostalgic theme and the yesteryear theme. The fact that we are in a small town and the folk are

generally friendly, all this plus many more naturals to the area, are used to the best advantage.

We can't possibly compete with the large shopping centres in Kitchener-Waterloo but we play up those things with which they cannot compete with us.

Just let me list a few things that my home town has got going for it.

1. It is a quaint small town with many unique features
2. People are generally friendly
3. It is in the Heart of Ontario's Pennsylvania Dutch Country
4. It is located in the centre of one of the best farming areas in Ontario
5. Many things natural to the area are of great interest to the visitors
6. It is a 75 minute drive from Toronto
60 minute drive from London
40 minute drive from Hamilton
30 minute drive from Cambridge
15 minute drive from Guelph
15 minute drive from Kitchener
10 minute drive from Waterloo
7. Elmira has a vast rural area to the north and west going as far as Owen Sound to the north from which area most people use the K-W area as their main shopping source and in order for them to go to Kitchener-Waterloo they must drive right through or within one mile of Elmira.

Up to this point in time, re-development in Elmira is only a partial success story. Re-development takes on many forms but until re-development of the mind of each individual property owner and store owner takes place, any physical re-development is impossible. In other words there must

be a recognition of an impending threat to one's security and the recognition of a need to do something about it. Once this step is accomplished that's 50% of the battle right there. I don't know about the larger urban areas, but this step seems to be a very difficult one to make in a smaller town because of the complacency that exists and the attitude of - "Let's wait and see". If one runs into this attitude, then the only hope is to go at it on an individual basis and hope the rest will follow. Take a positive approach. If a community, and those directly involved with it's commercial core, recognize the need for action, before any meaningful planning can be done, the other faces of re-development must be recognized:

1. Re-development means adequate off street parking but it doesn't end there as so many merchants think - it is only one step
2. It means beautification of streets, parking lots, etc. making it a true people place where people can shop in a relaxed non-rushed atmosphere. This is where we in smaller cities and towns can take advantage over the hustle and bustle of a larger city
3. It means upgrading of the appearance of the front and rear entrances to each individual building and the developing of a theme which could be carried out right through the core area (this is extremely important in a smaller town)
4. It means uniform signing bylaws plus, probably, the elimination of all on street parking
5. It means the development of short and long-range plans to handle traffic in and around the community

6. It means total co-operation on the part of all concerned and the philosophy that what is good for my neighbour has to be good for me. (If the participants take on the attitude of co-operating only on items which directly benefit them, total success cannot be attained).

7. Finally, everything is for naught, unless re-development takes place inside each and every business establishment - the decor - the merchandise presented - the attitude of the clerks etc.

It is here inside the stores where the action is - where success begins or failure ends it all.

I cannot emphasize too much the fact that re-development of any core area cannot be complete or successful unless it is done on a broad basis such as I have outlined.

Those of us in the retail business are going to be facing great competition for the consumer dollar. Consumer restraint will probably continue and maybe even increase as they become more selective and value conscious. Survival in the market place is going to become more difficult. That is why this word re-development becomes more significant each day. The next five years are going to be very critical for the small business man. In the next five years many downtown core areas will pass the point of no return if no positive program of re-development is initiated.

In my own home region of Waterloo, the City of Kitchener has a major shopping centre to the south plus many neighbourhood types. Millions of dollars have been spent on re-developing the core area making it one of the most beautiful city cores to be seen anywhere and they are continuing to spend more. Kitchener's sister city - Waterloo - has two major shopping centres plus the neighbourhood types. It's downtown core is fighting for survival. So what do the

local politicians do? They allow the re-zoning of choice farmland to the north of the city to allow for a major shopping centre.

In most official plans it calls for every step to be taken to insure the continued vitality and progress of the cores of our towns and cities. These policies are empty and meaningless unless politicians back up their words with action.

1. First approach a handful of leading business people within the community to assure a consensus with these individuals as to the need to do something
2. Then on a one to one basis, approach every individual who would be directly involved with a re-development program.
3. Call a general meeting of all those concerned to present a general outline as to the procedures and steps to be taken to initiate the program. This meeting should include only those directly concerned, and be closed to the media
4. From this general meeting form a committee with representation from all sections of the area concerned, giving this committee the power to form small working groups and the power to add people to these sub-committees
5. Such groups would become research points for parking, property, promotion, finance, traffic, ways and means, public relations, architecture and streetscape, etc.
6. The general committee should lay out terms of reference for each sub-committee with deadlines on the various stages of the program to insure that each group's responsibilities will be completed

7. At this point, make a presentation to the local council, outlining the work that has been done so far and requesting council to appoint a member to the general committee and to also serve on "the ways and means" sub-committee. This political representative must be one who sincerely believes in re-development and is willing to support it.
8. Within a specified period of time and if all committees are functioning well, an overall plan of re-development should be ready for presentation. This plan by necessity will be general in nature.
9. A meeting of the people directly involved plus the local politicians should be held to present the general plan, giving a brief run down of the work done by the various committees thus far
10. If a positive response is received on the preliminary work from the majority in attendance (80% or more) then a full time project manager or co-ordinator should be hired. There is just no way a person with his/her own business responsibilities can give the time required to co-ordinate and expedite such a project. All committees would still continue to function.
11. Up to now the going is relatively easy, but from here on it will take the co-operation and patience of everyone concerned and it is at this point in time where the local government must become involved. Up to now costs are light but from here on it hits the pocket book - and hard. And it is from here on in where there must be a close liason with the local and provincial governments. The person chosen to be co-ordinator will hold

the key to success or failure as it will depend much upon his or her initiative and ability to attain a high level of co-operation among the participants. At this stage, P.R. work is extremely important as well as keeping everyone well informed.

There is no easy way to achieve success in a re-development program. Costs are high and money is always in short supply. But re-development of most cores is a necessity, or we will see the disappearance of commercial activity in those areas in the next five years. Nothing will demoralize a community more than to drive down it's main street and see empty buildings - slowly deteriorating.

Re-development - What is it?

It begins with a state of mind - an acknowledgement of the need to take some action.

6.4 An Implementation Strategy for a Downtown Plan

G.L. Gilmore,
Aurora Redevelopment Commission,
Aurora, Illinois

While I was at the International Downtown Executives conference in Atlanta, Georgia several weeks ago, I was sitting next to one of your countrymen and a colleague of mine from Illinois. Since I was beginning to think about some of the things I wanted to say today, I thought it would be a good opportunity to ask the two of them for advice. My colleague from Illinois indicated that he was most impressed with the things he had seen in visiting a number of small and medium-sized cities throughout Canada and suggested that we might learn more from you than you from us. If what I have seen so far in Toronto is any indication of what you are doing in your communities, I must say I share this feeling. In the spirit of learning from each other, I would like to share with you some thoughts I have on downtown development as they relate

to the planning and implementation process.

First of all, let me suggest that there is no single revitalization game plan for all downtowns. Downtowns have different personalities, are subject to different pressures and have different resources, attitudes, people, and politics. Each downtown is unique and will develop in its own way to meet its own unique stresses, needs and goals. Of course, a key ingredient is planning and leadership. Downtowns will and must be recycled because the long-term growth, vitality and identity of our towns and cities is directly dependent on the economic, cultural and social well-being of downtown.

The condition of many of our downtowns might best be described in terms of a factory built many decades ago. As one long-time observer of downtowns expressed it, the factory prospered mightily for many years but modern technology changed all around it. Markets shifted physically, and consumer tastes changed. The machinery became rusty; repairs were needed. Perhaps, management has bled the factory unmercifully to fatten the profits. New competitors built modern, well-located plants. The question became 'would the competitors capture the whole market?' Would management, that's you and I, shut down the factory or would the board of directors find it fruitful to invest the time and money in making the factory productive again?

This is, of course, an analogy that is dramatically oversimplified, but it does help define the problem and illustrates the broad choices available. In most of our older downtowns in the United States there is much that is old, worn out, misused or misplaced. We have our old buildings, many of which were built for activities which do not even exist today. Often the attitudes of the people in our communities are as antiquated as the buildings and just as rigid. Many of our streets were built for horse and buggy days. Real estate is fragmented into many parcels, and many of

the owners are often absentee landlords.

In many cases, downtowns, not unlike that outdated factory, must bottom out before the impetus for change can be sparked. It is only then that a rebirth can occur. We must recognize that what comes next will not merely duplicate the old. This would be pointless and out of step. The rebirth will meet new needs in terms of activities and challenges of recycling our downtown areas, we are talking about activities requiring bold and imaginative leadership in both the public and private sectors.

Our downtowns, like that outdated factory, are in a transitional period. I would like to stress the term "transition" because it is a positive type of transition that is healthy and part of a normal growth process. Our challenge, as people involved in downtown development, is to identify where our downtowns should be. We need to harness the elements of change and direct them in a positive way. As we look at our downtowns in terms of their unique problems and potential, each of us is going through a sorting out process. We need to identify those things that give each of our downtowns individuality, uniqueness and character.

When you are in Aurora - we want you to know it because of its restored art deco theatre, its dramatic bridges, inviting mall and modern Civic Centre located in an attractive river setting.

As we proceed with the planning of downtown areas, we must also recognize certain economic realities. As a general statement, we can say that there are certain activities which are showing vigor in downtowns:

- a) Business Administration
- b) Government and social services
- c) Banking and Finance
- d) Housing (especially for the young and old)
- e) Leisure Activities

- f) Art and culturally-oriented activities
- g) Specialty shopping
- h) Convenience shops for nearby residents
- i) Business services
- j) Consumer services
- k) Historic and tourist-oriented activities

On the other hand, there are activities which will be difficult to retain if, in fact, they even exist in many of our downtowns. - manufacturing, wholesaling, and regional shopping centers.

Downtown Aurora, Illinois which in many ways could be described as a text book case of a declining downtown, was once the business and civic hub of the city and the surrounding region. By the early 1970's, Aurora's downtown had lost much of its attractiveness. New shopping centres had developed over the previous 10-15 years. (We have been fortunate as a city since these shopping centres were all built within the city itself, so the city was able to retain those valuable real estate and retail sales tax dollars.) We found as we began our planning in the early part of 1973, that it was necessary to redefine the role of our downtown. It was old and depressed, yet because of its central location, it had considerable potential. Those involved in the development of the plan for revitalization of our downtown recognized that there was considerable potential for attracting private investors, if major transformations were made to provide adequate building sites, amenities for shoppers and visitors, swift traffic flow, more convenient parking and other attractions.

Aurora is located on the edge of the Chicago Metropolitan region, 39 miles west of Chicago. Aurora is a community 141 years in age and has a population of over 80,000 people. The city possesses a fairly heavy middle-income blue collar population and has a strong, diversified economic base. The heart of our downtown contains approximately 83 acres. Of these 83 acres, approximately 11 acres are consumed by the Fox River, which bisects the downtown

area, and 72 acres of land. The most viable and most cohesive concentration of downtown activities are contained within about 25 square blocks.

The Master Development Plan that was established for downtown Aurora in 1974 set five major goals. First, to establish and maintain downtown Aurora as a centre of government, finance, social services, civic, cultural, specialized commercial and entertainment functions for the city and a region of approximately 250,000 people. Second, to encourage the redevelopment of the downtown by means of a coordinated program. Third, to retain and enhance the historic character of the buildings. (Many of our buildings were built in the late 19th century). Fourth, to maximize potential use and enjoyment of the Fox River. Five, to initiate immediate development activity in the downtown area.

Four priority projects were identified with the intent of initiating immediate development activity. These projects include:

- 1) The recently completed Water Street Mall, a tree and bench lined pedestrian haven and performance space that brings a touch of Europe to the community.
 - 2) the Paramount Arts Centre, a 1930's Art Deco movie/vaudeville theatre that is being carefully restored to its original beauty and equipped with the most contemporary facilities. The 1900-seat Arts Centre will open in the Spring of 1978, and plans call for children's matinees, film festivals, theatre events, concerts, road shows and a variety of other day and nighttime activities. Aurora is a community that is gambling on the arts for its downtown turn around.
 - 3) a civic centre complex composed of government, private and professional office space, commercial areas for retail stores and restaurants, a hotel, and banquet, conference and trade show facilities, all connected by a landscaped system of pedestrian walkways and plazas, and
 - 4) the renovation of our sidewalk areas 5 blocks completed.
- We expected that these projects would reinforce the downtown as a full time activity centre both day and night and encourage future

private investment.

To carry out these priority projects, a nine-member Aurora Redevelopment Commission, a private non-profit corporation, was established in 1974 to guide the revitalization of the city's centre. These same commission members were also designated as the Aurora Civic Centre Authority, the organization responsible for the operating the projects developed by the Redevelopment Commission. To carry out downtown revitalization, the City of Aurora committed \$4.9 million, and these funds were coupled in 1976 with \$10.3 million obtained from the State of Illinois, giving us just over a \$15 million budget of public funds to serve as a catalyst for private investment. We are now working with the Carley Capital Group, private developers from Madison, Wisconsin, on the development of the multi-use Civic Centre Complex.

A key policy of the downtown program was that downtown property owners and merchants should share in a reasonable amount of the downtown improvement costs. The first Special Service Tax Area, therefore, was created, at the initiate of the property owners, in one-third of the downtown in 1976 as a method whereby the property owners and merchants through increased real estate taxes would share in the cost of certain public improvements. A Commission composed of property owners and merchants has been appointed by the Mayor and City Council to oversee the expenditure of these tax funds. This group will also act as a catalyst for buildings improvement program and a new merchant search which will be launched this winter. The SSA Committee, will hopefully, also work for the establishment of an effective management, maintenance, security promotion and marketing systems, similar to that found in the suburban shopping centres.

We also have a year round program of downtown events like the annual Aurorafest, a Sunday summer concert series, an Easter Sunrise Service, a weekly TGIF party, a two day folk festival, art fairs, an annual bed race, and an Oktoberfest. These events attract thousands

of area residents to the downtown area for browsing, shopping and plain old fun.

Some suggestions:

First, if any of you are just launching a major downtown program, I would strongly recommend the hiring of a professional downtown development director. Second, you may want to become aware of the various services that are made available by the International Downtown Executives Association. I have found the IDEA organization and its individual members to be an invaluable resource. Third, I would suggest that you assume your community knows little or nothing about what you are doing and make a concerted effort to involve people from throughout the community in your downtown planning and promotional efforts, e.g. shopper/parking surveys, etc. Share the dream of downtown development; let others get involved and accept your plans and programs as their plans and programs. You will be amazed at the progress you can make by adopting this attitude. Fourth, learn the economic conditions of your downtown - try not to fight them but mold them towards you own ends. You may want to set economic "before and after" benchmarks based on such indices as real estate and retail sales taxes, crime, employees, etc. to measure progress of your downtown activities. This data can serve as an effective sales device for City fathers, prospective investors and the community at large. Fifth, develop a master plan that is comprehensive, flexible and can respond to changing conditions over time. Look at other communities and learn their successes and failures. Apply those elements that best serve the needs of your own downtown. Collect slides. Sixth, move with speed to show visible signs of progress as soon as possible. Seventh, build on existing assets, ie., buildings with aesthetical and economic value, physical features, market, community traditons. Eighth, seek private developer input early in the planning stage and gain an understanding of the incentives that are important to attract developers and other investors. Ninth, strive for partnership relationships with the city

fathers, the real estate community, financial institutions, federal and state agencies, the citizenry and the media. I cannot stress too much the importance of the private-public sector commitment to a successful downtown revitalization program. If nothing else, I would like to leave you with this single message. Tenth, wherever possible, assume the role of a catalyst; don't try to do it all yourself.

Finally, there are certain personal traits that help one deal effectively with the difficult and frustrating problems of downtown development. Among them are obvious things such as vision, aggressiveness, positive attitude to combat the negativism that is inevitable in many communities, political sensitivity, and thickness of hide. You are engaged in a pioneering effort, therefore, expect abuse. Learn to live with being at the centre of controversy. Patience and staying power are important traits in a profession where progress is often measured in terms of the old football analogy: three yards and a cloud of dust. Adopt an openness to the public and be prepared to answer questions. Hold evening meetings. Incorporate sight and sound shows and other graphic presentations in your repertoire. Schedule talk sessions with service clubs and other concerned community organizations. Establish, if at all possible, a streetfront office. While all of us engaged in downtown rejuvenation activities have our share of frustrations, I know of few other fields that offer the high dividends of personal growth and satisfaction in successfully

performing a task so vital to the long term growth and development of our cities and the nation.

In closing, I would like to draw our attention to the Egyptian hieroglyphic for "city", a cross within a circle. The cross was the symbol of the town square which served as the heart of the community, the centre of power, commerce, water and other resources. The town square was a place where people came together to share common experiences. It was the centre of political, social and cultural life. The town square possessed an atmosphere of neighbourliness - a place where everyone came together to trade, exchange information, and have fun. People felt secure. The people in general owned the town square. We must attempt to cultivate this spirit of the ancient city as we develop the new downtown. We must rekindle and capture the feeling that was in that town square. The new downtown must be safe, clean and inviting. In many of our communities, the downtown area must serve as a catalyst for renewing civic pride and a sense of community cooperation in various forms of public/private partnerships. These goals can be accomplished through careful planning and committed civic and private leadership. Our downtowns must be accessible to all citizens. Downtown, after all, is a neighbourhood. We must humanize downtown areas through the provision of parks, cultural activities, and public entertainment - here we're talking about a quality of life that is so critical to the future health and vitality of our cities in North America.



Non-retail uses in a downtown **7**

7.1 The Office Function as a Focus of CBD: Redevelopment in Small Cities

William R. Code,
University of Western Ontario

The commercial cores of cities have always witnessed departures of some of their once traditional activities. Commonly, however, this departure was compensated for by the assimilation of new demands for the core space. In the modern period most cities, even some of a considerable size have experienced an acceleration in departures, relative decline of the CBD and in some cases absolute decline. Only a few of North America's cities have been able to maintain their core's relative stature at levels even comparable to their historic position and they have done so by assimilating significant expansion of core office communities.

Indeed, in these very few cities, many among the host of activities taking place within these office quarters display a stronger attachment to the core than even the most specialized retailing. Moreover, the types of office functions found in these rare cities display some quite positive attributes as a focus of the urban core, despite the fashionable view that sees them as being in conflict with "vitality". They have significant local multiplier effects on a myriad of retailing and service functions (in American cities there is a very strong statistical relationship between quantity of retailing and the quantity of office space). Among other virtues of offices in the core, their demands frequently parallel those of the urban tourist and convention industry. Generally, those cities which have successfully retained office activity in the urban centre, are those which also have maintained an appeal to visitors. Thus it is not unnatural to search within the office function for that elusive base of support for faltering urban cores. But unfortunately the type of office functions one finds spontaneously developing in those cities with relatively prosperous CBD's are exceptional. For most cities and particularly the smaller centres of concern

here (less than 150,000), a significant melding of clusters of offices into the fabric of the CBD is no less challenging than the direct revitalization of core retailing in the present environment of spatially liberated consumers. In these centres with little built-in demand pressure for core office space the successful development of a CBD orientation of office functions involves delicate planning intervention premised on careful research particularly into the quantity and qualities of the likely sources of demand.

Where Could the Offices Come from?

It is a mistake to extrapolate from the fact that because office activities possess a similar workplace morphology that they share an equally similar commonality of locational demands. Indeed the variation in these demands among the innumerable office functions are as diverse as one finds, for example, in the manufacturing sector. Treating offices as a unity can very easily lead to inappropriate conclusions regarding the potentialities of various locations for office development. Thus, before dealing with the possible origins of the office demand we may wish to mold into the cores of our smaller cities, it is necessary to establish a framework of the locational demands in the office industry.

A Functional Typology of Offices

While it is possible to develop innumerable classificatory systems for the office function, the following non-exclusive five class division is a useful one interpreting spatial variations in office demand.

1. Those office functions which are information dependent, deal with non-routine information with subjects where relatively high levels of uncertainty exist and where the potential value of perfect information is great.

For these types of office functions the main locational criteria is access to those with whom they exchange information. This class is the crucial one for understanding

the core of some metropolitan areas such as Toronto. The dominant locational factor for these types of office functions is orientation to a localized information environment rather than accessibility to markets.

2. Those offices which are tightly linked to the first type.

These activities are not intimately involved with intensive information exchange but are closely linked on an ongoing basis with those offices which are, and are usually within the same firm. They constitute what have been described as the "back room" functions which although largely independent of direct contact outside their firm, have a close relation with those directing the firm, who, in turn, are tightly linked.

3. Those which are largely self-contained, which have limited links to other activities and are dealing with routine information.

While a considerable amount of such activity has been absorbed by data processing machinery, there are still many offices which are of this type. These are particularly associated with organizations which dominate their field of endeavor such as those of government and some large corporations. This sub-population, with information links largely internal rather than external, lacks the inherent need for proximity with other office functions and their locations generally reflect other variable such as labour force accessibility.

4. Those offices whose main objective is marketing goods or services, or managing activities in a local, metropolitan or broader area and which require access to those areas.

The locational demands of these types of offices can be realistically examined within the framework of traditional marketing-based location, theory and their evolving locational patterns assessed in

terms of market thresholds and the changing accessibility relationships within a city or broader region.

5. Those offices which are linked to a non-office activity such as a manufacturing plant or warehouse (adjunctive-office activity).

This class includes the sizeable quantity of office space which activities such as manufacturing have associated with them, either because of the need for office workers to be close to the production or other facilities, or because it is convenient for corporations to locate even loosely related activities under the same roof. The locational demands of these offices are generally reflective of the locational needs of the non-office activities.

In this diversity, are a number of functions where relocation to a small city core would be viewed as akin to a terminal disease, but fortunately there are a number of others where such a location would be inconvenient at worst and attractive at best particularly if encouraging policies were implemented. But such policies, in order to be effective, would have to be predicted on a realistic assessment of the quantity of potential demand and the economic and physical environment that demand would require.

Relocation from Major Centres or Locally Derived Demand?

A tempting starting point in the search for potential office demand in smaller cities in Ontario is among the occupants of the over 50 million square feet of net rentable office space in Metropolitan Toronto and particularly within the sizeable agglomeration of over 35 million (net rentable) in the metropolitan core. It appears particularly tempting in light of the conventional wisdom that the "wired" society has now loosened the fetters which tie the information dependent office functions to such dominant centres. However,

the decentralizing potential inherent in the advances in telecommunication, transportation and business organization seems to have been matched by the reciprocal potential in these advances for centralization. We have witnessed, for example, in the post-telephone era, the centralization of all banking head office activity in Toronto and Montreal (moderated slightly by the recent reincarnation of the Bank of British Columbia in Vancouver) whereas at various times prior to 1925 over 35 Canadian cities and towns possessed one or more bank headquarters. Also, measurement of the costs and savings incurred by those largely information intensive functions located in the core of Toronto indicate that it is not in their interests to relocate even in that city's suburbs. Communications improvements may ultimately encourage relocation out of Toronto to Ontario's smaller cities but there is scant encouragement to be found in either the historic or ongoing trends.

Some people have hoped that the gains to the corporation to be had from further agglomeration of office activities in Toronto's core have levelled off and that other centres may gain in relative attractiveness. However, even if this were true, and there is little indication that it is, those centres which could prove to be viable alternatives to Toronto's central office community would be much larger or nearer than most of the smaller Ontario cities outside Toronto's metropolitan area. Thus, for those functions which are heavily information dependent and those linked to them (types 1 & 2 above) the small cities would be an impractical alternative.

Within cities such as Toronto and particularly in their suburbs a large quantity of office space is occupied by activities which have little demand for external information sources, and whose main demands are those of market and labour accessibility. Some, of course, are oriented to the large metropolitan Toronto market and could not realistically move from there. Others are geared to a regional, or national market, but here too,

the market potential of Toronto weights heavily as an attractive force, which is compounded by the advantage of frequent air service and the generally radiating ground transport facilities. Again, this is an unlikely source for significant small city office demand.

However, in the remaining two types of presently metropolitan office functions the "routine" and the "manufacturing adjunctive" there is some potential for diversion to smaller cities. Both of the higher levels of government have recently been decentralizing some of their routine office functions, and while there is scant evidence of non-governmental organizations decentralization their routine activities beyond the metropolitan areas, with appropriate incentives some may be enticed to reallocate them to smaller cities, particularly those with relatively easy access to Toronto. Also, there is evidence that the relative productivity advantages of a metropolis over at least medium sized cities is considerably less than is the case for highly information dependent office functions indicating that small centre development may continue to be closely linked to manufacturing expansion. To the extent that manufacturing is enticed to smaller centres, a quantity of adjunctive office space may also be drawn to those communities presenting at least the possibility of its partial separation from the nearby plant for location in the city's core.

In general, however, it is unrealistic to expect any considerable net migration of office activity from the central metropolis, or to premise office development policies within these cores upon such an eventuality (barring cases of the transferral of significant governmental divisions).

There does remain, however, a significant base of endogenously derived demand for office space within the smaller cities, which can serve as the main basis for policies geared to reorienting demand. While small cities have not witnessed rates of expansion of office

demand comparable to some large metropolitan areas, they have also been affected by the shift in employment to the services, many of which are office based. Everything from local radio stations, and the telephone company, to sales offices, credit agencies, insurance operations, health services, accountantss, labour organizations and of course the myriad of government services can generate considerable demands for office space.

Difficulties in Redirecting Demand to The Small City Core

Unfortunately, most of the office activities present in small cities are not tightly linked to other offices which would provide an incentive for clustering in a core agglomeration. Thus there is no innate process retarding a loose scattering of these activities within and even beyond the small city. Also, in terms of accessibility to the local population a location outside the core may be more desirable. This is especially true in those cities which have a major freeway on the city's circumference. Moreover, in the absence of significant mass transit utilization, in most circumstances, the core possesses little accessibility advantages for the labour force, and if the core is blighted it may be at a competitive disadvantage to suburban office industrial parks in terms of the intangible element of prestige.

These relative disadvantages of the core are compounded in the case of manufacturing or wholesaling adjunctive office space. Any significant marginal increase in the activity to which these offices are linked will be in suburban industrial parks, providing clear advantages in accessibility and in the costs of land and site dimensions. Thus, not only does this form of office have little innate demand for core space, but is also linked to activities with a clear preference for an outlying location.

The reorientation of the marginal increase in office space demand to a core location is clearly not an easy proposition, however

desirable from the point of view of the overall urban structure and morphology. Fortunately however, the small city core is not without its virtues for office activities.

Exploiting The Advantages of The Small City Core as an Office Location

Traditionally the small city core possessed two prime advantages - accessibility to the urban and regional population and the ease with which its compact form enabled internal interaction. While the former advantage may have all but disappeared under the onslaught of transportation and communications advances, some of the latter virtue still exists or at least remains capable of revival. While the quantity of interaction between small city core offices will generally be slight, there is a clear symbiotic relationship between office functions on the one hand and retailing, services, and hotels on the other. If the downtown has maintained a relatively high level of retailing and services, particularly fashionable retailing, there would remain an advantage for office staff in terms of shopping and service opportunities. The existence of this advantage, of course, will vary widely among smaller cities, generally being more evident in those centres attracting significant numbers of visitors from outside. For the visitor, the core is still likely to be the "city" and the demands of this visiting population - for hotel accomodation, fashionable shopping, interesting restaurants, entertainment and public facilities of various kinds - tend to parallel many of the needs of the office function, particularly those with significant outside linkages. A further asset which the central areas of some small cities still retain lies in the potential of reusing historic structures, possibly in a mixed use format, and therein capturing an element of prestige and its intangible benefits. The roots of a circular and cumulative causation process are apparent in these interrelationships - the demands of offices encouraging expansion of hotels, restaurants and

fashionable retailing and this in turn encouraging the flow of visitors and improving the desirability of the core for office users, all providing an economic incentive for an improved core morphology, and so on. This complementarity of the office function, therefore, may well justify parallel policies designed to encourage the office, as well as retailing in the core.

A Note on Strategies for Refocusing The Office in Small Cities

There has been an unfortunate tradition in planning of formulating undue amounts of policy in the form of "thou shalt not" and it may be tempting to encourage a refocusing of the small city offices functions by placing restrictions on alternative locations. Such a policy course may be effective in regard to much of the possible office space demand within the small city. For most of these functions the range of locational advantages among competing sites is not great and as a result, the restraint on development in outlying areas may well be expressed in terms of a transferral of demand to the city centre. There are hazards in this approach however, for given the inherent footloose character of most small city offices some may be tempted to depart from the city to nearby areas or equally likely in some cases to the suburbs of Toronto. In the case of the manufacturing adjunctive office function, restrictive policies on office development within industrial parks may well induce some relocation of those activities not intimately tied to the production process not to the city core but to a location in or near the probably metropolitan head office. Also, of course, there is the risk of losing the firms operations in their entirety. In these circumstances, if such a strategy were adopted, it would be wise to so design it so as to maintain a high level of flexibility in its application.

More appropriately for this problem would be the adoption of one or more of the many forms of positive inducements possible for

promoting development, either by themselves or coupled with a flexible policy of restraint on peripheral office growth. Without such inducements the consequence could well be the retardation of the city's economic development, rather than the establishment of one of the foundations of a more vital core.

7.2 U.S. Analysis of Downtowns

William R. Hill,
Executive Director International
Executives Association

I gather that at least some cities in Ontario are having the same kind of difficulty with downtown retailing as the vast majority of U.S. cities. Therefore, it is quite appropriate for us to talk about non-retail functions which can be carried out in and near downtown areas.

I want to put the situation in perspective by telling you a little about the results of extensive research recently completed by IDEA and Real Estate Research Corporation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. We analyzed downtown areas in a sample of 25 cities, primarily in economic terms keyed to basic indicators which we feel shed a considerable amount of light on the condition of a downtown area. The key economic indicators we used were retail sales, office space, employment, public and private investment, and real estate tax value. We are satisfied that our sample was representative enough to enable us to do some generalizing.

Frankly, we found just about what we expected to find in most instances. I'm going to summarize some of the findings very briefly, and you can determine how your situations may be similar or different. We verified, probably for the ten thousandth time, a trend that is well known to virtually everyone, at least in the U.S. Population has been moving from cities to the suburbs since World War II. This outward movement has accelerated in the past 10 years. As the

population has moved out, it has been followed by retailing and the consequent and ever-increasing number of suburban shopping centres. Quite naturally, this has had an adverse impact on downtown retailing.

Only two of our sample cities showed gains in retail sales volume for the 15-year period covered by the study. The average loss in retail sales volume during this period for all cities in the sample was 16.6 per cent. I might add that the last year for which reliable retail sales figures were available for the downtown areas in all of our sample cities was 1972. I can also add that since this finding was widely publicized in the U.S. last September, no one has rushed forth to tell us that downtown retail sales have improved during the past five years.

Further analysis of the loss of downtown retail sales revealed an interesting possibility. We found that movement of population to the suburbs and the development of suburban shopping centres accounted for about 80 per cent of the loss downtown. Our interpretation of this is that the remaining 20 per cent is attributable largely to downtown retailers themselves - probably because they have failed to modernize their facilities, have conducted ineffective customer service, marketing and advertising programs, or have simply failed to address their potential markets properly while they decided whether or not to stay downtown. We saw enough successful exceptions to the rule in downtown retailing to indicate that some or all of these things may be true.

Nevertheless, retailing - like all other economic functions - follows the market, that is the people. Where this is characterized by a shift to the suburbs, it means that the basic functions of the downtown area must be altered accordingly. It does not mean that the downtown area no longer can be viable.

In fact, we found that despite the difficulties with retailing and other problems, most of the downtown areas in our sample continued to be the largest single generators

of tax revenue and the largest single centres of employment in their areas. Despite the loss of sales volume, most also continued to be the largest single retail centres in their regions.

We believe those findings are very important. Downtown as a taxpayer, employment centre and generator of jobs is critically important to the total community, not just the downtown business people.

Balanced against the loss in retail sales, we found a huge increase in office space in virtually all of the sample cities. We also found that the number of people employed in most of the sample downtown areas was increasing. We found that the downtowns in our sample accounted on the average for nearly 13 per cent of the city's total real estate tax base while occupying an average of 1.8 per cent of the land area. Several of the sample downtowns accounted for 20 per cent or more of the total city real estate tax revenue.

What is your downtown area like? What is its economic value to the total community? Is retailing in your downtown impacted by the out-migration of population? If not, is it going to be in the future? Have you undertaken an objective analysis to find out what markets there really are for potential development of your downtown? If so, do you have the public and private organization and management vehicles in place to assure that something constructive is done about your findings? If any of these questions are still unanswered in your community, you should develop answers immediately, if not sooner.

So far, I have not indulged in a listing of non-retail functions which are appropriate in or near downtown. I have tried to indicate that there may be due cause to think about non-retail functions and that despite loss of retailing the downtown area can continue to be quite viable and valuable to the total community.

This is evidenced in a number of smaller cities in our sample, including Allentown, Pennsylvania; Evanston, Illinois; Portland, Maine; Kalamazoo, Michigan; Oak Park, Illinois; Spokane, Washington and Roanoke, Virginia.

The same can be said for larger cities such as Chicago, Seattle, Washington; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Charlotte, North Carolina; St. Louis, Missouri; Baltimore, Maryland; Cincinnati, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Looking across our sample of cities, we find examples of the many non-retail functions which contribute to a healthy downtown core. Foremost among these is office space housing a wide variety of services, including financial, real estate, legal, accounting, computers, energy and on and on. We also find downtown cores being put to good use as centres of government, convention business, culture, education, medical services, entertainment and transportation.

We find the movement toward living in and near the downtown in the United States to be small in number but important symbolically at the present time. We hope this is beginning of a trend that is going to grow, rather than a passing fad. Hard facts are lacking, and the back-to-the-city movement, as we call it, definitely runs against the grain of general population movement in recent years. This is not to say that the movement toward centre city living has not reached sizeable proportions in a few large cities. We do not know whether this is something which can or will filter down to smaller cities.

One of our findings is controversial. Our research did not establish a relationship between the percentage of minority population in a city and the rise or fall of downtown retail sales. We believe this finding is valid and that the dominant influences on downtown retail sales are downtown employment and total population in and near the city limits corresponding to the natural downtown retail market area. Therefore, one of the

major differences often cited between Canadian and U.S. cities may not be as significant as we have thought it to be.

I want to conclude by citing three things I believe are important.

1. Retailing entirely aside, most downtown areas are and should continue to be critically important to the total community as taxpayers and major centres of employment. In the broadest sense, it can be said that employment and tax production are downtown functions supported by many activities other than retailing.
2. All of us can list the many non-retail functions which make downtown much more than a shopping centre. Only current, realistic market analysis will reveal the best uses for each downtown area and whether or not retailing can be among these uses.
3. It is necessary to plan and build to establish the strongest possible linkages among existing functions in your downtown area and among these and new functions to be developed. Access, parking and pedestrian linkages must be properly related to all other functions whether they are retailing or non-retailing.

There are no easy, quick ways to do these latter two things. Long term commitment and an effective, on-going public-private partnership are mandatory, if you want to get the job done. I am compelled to add that time is important. Market opportunities do not stand still. They are moving targets. If you don't find them and hit them the first time, you may not have another chance.

7.3 The Canadian Option; Urban Consolidation

Barton Myers,
Architect,
Toronto

"A case for accomodating urban growth through urban consolidation, in particular the potentials of utilizing non-retail functions such as housing and office spaces to reinforce the existing urban fabric through sympathetic intensification, (How to learn to love recycling, infilling, and low-rise, high density new construction)."

For too long, the planning emphasis in Canada has focussed on the major urban centres and little attention has been given to one of this country's most marvelous resources, her smaller towns and cities. While Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver basked in the limelight of urban interest, our smaller communities, almost unnoticed and without aid, have been undergoing radical change, and today face urban problems similar to those of their bigger sisters, such as urban sprawl, decaying downtowns, and uncertain economic bases. Much to our surprise, the per capita cost of dealing with such urban problems is, in fact, much higher than in the larger urban cities previously mentioned.

It is thus timely, that this conference will focus its attention on downtown revitalization, and I hope that we use the collective resources of the excellent talent that is assembled here to address these very critical problems.

Canada is one of the most urbanized countries in the world, and it is my hope that this country, which has so much potential, will be known as the country of the most civilized cities of the 20th century. The city is the supreme expression of a people's cultural level and the full cross section of our cities show what we are as people.

Thus in a culture which has been largely based on the assumption of continuous growth and expansion, the most important issue facing our cities remains that of how to deal with growth, although the expectation of growth to the end of this century will undoubtedly be modified downward from that most extraordinarily growth-minded period of the 1960's. It is thus critical that long range economic planning be seen as the basis for urban

planning, and that a city's expectations be carefully related to both market and physical potential, and appropriately translated into land use policy (or zoning).

I want to emphasize this because in the past, too often our zoning has been arbitrary and not realistically related to market potential and context, resulting in over-zoned downtowns.

Do you know how permitted densities are arrived at in your town? The story is that Ottawa selected 9X floor area ratio on advice of a Philadelphia planner who said that was what they used in Philadelphia! As an abstract vehicle, our land use zoning has produced the devastated results that we now find in so many of our communities - decaying downtowns, decreasing tax bases - the problems that bring us together at this conference.

Issue number one, then, is that our zoning must be more definite or quantifiable, and more realistically related to potential growth. In other words, we must be more careful in deciding how much density various land uses require and then in relating these to circumstances.

Once one has a view of needs (or program) then there exists a number of alternatives for the distribution of the densities of that program. We are obviously aware that at a block level there are a number of ways a particular amount of density may be arranged (ie. the arguments of high density, high-rise vs. high density, low-rise), but we seem less clear about how density at a urban level might also be alternatively distributed. To date, most of our smaller communities have the same high density CBD - low density urban sprawl official plans as our major cities.

I would like to illustrate quickly this problem and make a case for a policy of urban consolidation - one which keeps the bulldozer at bay while intensifying the urban fabric through recycling, infilling and new construction which reinforces the urban fabric in a complementary way. The work we are doing for the City of Cambridge, attempts

to follow just such an approach.

We have the responsibility, with the city, to translate its potential into a long range development program and this is carefully viewed in relationships to existing as well as future land use opportunities. At the scale of communities such as Cambridge, presently 70,000 with an official plan growth potential of 170,000, it is possible to actually look at these potentials physically and evaluate alternative methods of development. In Cambridge, a detailed building and land inventory was made and forms the basis for identifying development potentials. Density and distribution alternatives are worked out and evaluated, and the best set of alternatives becomes the basis for zoning definition and urban development guidelines.

If Cambridge is typical of many of our smaller cities, a city with a great tradition and with many of her fine earlier structures still intact, then this sort of planning process must be of paramount importance if we are not to destroy the city's most important resource. The new growth potentials, and in particular growth potentials in non-retail functions such as housing and office spaces, must be accommodated by consolidating the community, not by destroying existing fabric to make way for the new. It is my view, that there are a number of very exciting development options that are not permitted under current official planning attitudes and this situation must be rectified immediately.

"The architects and city fathers who constructed these squares rarely found it necessary to destroy existing buildings; they preferred to reconcile the new with the old, to preserve whatever could be preserved. In so doing, they did not bind themselves to any rigid scheme. The urge to create new forms was always tempered by respect for what already existed. Reverence for the historic past explains why old Italian squares are hardly ever alike. . .Moving about in the squares of Venice, Bologna, and Rome, however, one feels that, figuratively speaking, they

have continued to grow. They provide the setting for past history as well as for the living present. If a sense of history is one of the special attributes of man, then here in these squares, more than anywhere else, the realization is granted to him of how much the past conditions his present and future existence. This paradox has been beautifully expressed by T.S. Eliot.

'Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in
time future
And time future contained in
time past.'

Four Quartets"

Wolfgang Lotz,
Italian Renaissance Architecture

7.4 The Downtown Still has a Retail Role

Philip Smith,
Marathon Realty,
Toronto

Although the subject for this panel is "non-retail uses in a downtown", I hope you will forgive me if a fair amount of my remarks are directed towards retail uses. My experience is mainly in retail development and I believe that in order to maintain a healthy central business district, a strong retail area is essential. My remarks are also mainly in respect of those areas of the Province of Ontario outside of Metropolitan Toronto, which has its own special problems.

Downtown

Historically the downtown of a city or town was the place where the local population congregated to carry on business, to trade or barter, to find entertainment, to fulfill their cultural needs and to govern and administer themselves. Not necessarily in that order.

There is still a recognized need for a "downtown" notwithstanding the growth of the

suburbs, the increased use of automobiles, the growth of suburban shopping centres and the decentralization of some of the original downtown functions. People are still drawn to the downtown because of the wide variety of facilities but it is the retail uses which draw the largest number of people on a day to day basis and provide the vitality which is necessary. A strong downtown requires a strong retail area which requires strong control of suburban shopping centres.

U.S. Experience

You may be surprised that a private developer would make such a statement.

I would however refer you to the U.S. experience where the uncontrolled development of large shopping centres, far larger than their Canadian counterparts, was probably the most significant factor in the decline of the central area of many cities.

This is not just a phenomenon of large U.S. cities - it is all too easy to find central areas in small, medium-sized towns and cities practically denuded of retail establishments.

Once the downtown retail uses were destroyed the other commercial uses, in the downtown, also deteriorated. In most U.S. cities and towns large sums of money are now being spent in order to revive the central areas. Developers can obtain cheap land through various authorities, substantial tax concessions and various grants.

The lesson for Canadian towns and cities and the implications for central business districts are very clear. We learn many things from the Americans, we can also learn from their mistakes.

Healthy Downtown

How do you maintain a healthy "downtown" or revive an ailing one?

First you need a good official plan. Good in

the sense that it is realistic for the present and immediate future needs of the city or town. Then you need the courage to maintain that plan, some changes will be required, but do not allow it to be sacrificed to political expediency. A developer investing in a central business district faces many problems and he needs to know that the conditions which exist when he makes his investment decision will be maintained for a reasonable period of time.

The plan should of course provide for good road access, adequate public transportation and, most essential, good well-located parking facilities, be they public or private.

The Private Developer's View of Downtown

A private developer has to have an economically viable project, he has to show a profit of his operation. After all he has a mortgage to pay and other expenses to be met, just like any private householder. Therefore a developer is mainly interested in retail, office or residential development.

Convention centres, art galleries, museums, libraries, live theatres, concert halls, and public buildings are not profitable in a commercial sense and their provision by developers is strictly limited.

The difficulties of assembling a one-to-three-acre site in a downtown are considerable and as the very high cost when compared with undeveloped land.

The developer needs help in the form of reasonable co-operation from the authorities. Even with good co-operation it will probably take two years to get a project to the construction stage.

High land costs are a strong inducement towards mixed use development - the delight of some architects and urban designers. However, there are considerable problems. There is a limited demand for offices in smaller cities and the rentals required to give a

return on current costs is probably higher than the existing market rents. Retail, office and residential do not mix easily, in any combination, because of the different functions of these uses and the requirements of the tenants. They generate a host of construction and operating problems.

From a practical point of view, there is generally a predominant use. You can have retail with some offices, offices with some retail or residential with some retail. In my opinion offices and residential do not mix at all.

Let me say a few words about architectural or historical buildings. Although I recognize the need to retain some of these buildings we do seem to have gone from one extreme to the other.

It is extremely difficult to incorporate an old building into a modern development and it seems to make very little sense to retain the outside facade and completely modernise the inside.

In our Peterborough Square development we did retain the old Market Hall and I believe our architects did an excellent job blending it in with the new buildings. However, it doesn't really work and we still have not been able to find a suitable use for the upper floor.

Finally I would like to mention hotels.

I have visited a number of towns or cities where there seemed to be potential for a downtown re-development. In most cases, probably because of my company's association with CP Hotels, it was suggested that a hotel be incorporated into the redevelopment.

At the present time very few new hotels are being built, occupancy rates are generally low and most hotel groups are looking for management contracts which are not very attractive to developers.

I expect this situation will continue for some years and that the hotel groups will be very cautious in their development programs.



Investment potential in downtowns **8**

8.1 Making the Most of Ontario's Middle Size Markets

R. Hamilton,
W.W. Urban Consultants,
Toronto

Introduction

As this session deals with the problems and potentials of middle-size Ontario cities, I intend to take a few minutes identifying and discussing these markets. After touching briefly on some of the often identified problems faced by smaller merchants in these markets, I will comment on existing programs designed to stimulate improvement of downtown areas and then concentrate the rest of my time on some practical commentary related to implementation of core area activities which can be of benefit both to the smaller merchants and the community at large.

The Markets

When we mention Ontario middle-size cities, just what are we talking about? After removing Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton from a list of the Province's major cities, we are left with a group of twenty odd communities which, for purposes of discussion, have been termed "middle-size cities". The list includes not only the population of each city, but a ballpark estimate of the trade area population which makes up each market. As has been said many times, each city is unique unto itself. A simple but critical characteristic of this uniqueness is exhibited on the table. As you can see, some cities, such as Belleville, have a relatively small city population with a comparatively large hinterland, while in other cases, the city population is large in relation to the area served beyond its boundaries. This factor alone can impose fairly complicated merchandising considerations for the local merchants as well as serious political implications in respect of the role of the community within its trade area.

Although this symposium is designed to deal

with the problems of the downtown, it is essential in my view that city fathers face up to the facts of life of their particular community. Broadly speaking, this means taking stock of the inventory of facilities and services in each community, then establishing some goals which are acceptable not only to the politicians but to the mass of consumers who constitute the community as a whole. It is a sobering thought that many of the communities mentioned still may not really know where they think they are going even for the next 20 years, a period which is of minimum critical length for most major retailers and financial institutions and many small and medium sized merchants as well.

It is simply not enough for a community to say, "we have to diversify our economy", that "we should follow the chamber of commerce or the board of trade in bringing new industry to our city", or that "we wish to have most of the amenities available to the major Canadian cities while at the same time maintaining our basically small town way of life". If the landowners and merchants in a community are to respond positively and invest their money and their livelihoods in the future of our downtowns, they have got to know which way the the bandwagon is headed before they jump on it. The differences in make-up of each market critically affect the direction each city should follow, and the long term merchandising techniques which will provide the best service to the greatest number of people.

When a consensus, either formal or informal, has been reached, the role of the central business district should be considered. Start with the basics which apply to each community. Once again, planners have already provided us with inventories of existing buildings including comments on their conditions. In most cases, the supporting services, including streets, parking and utilities, have been studies from a number of angles.

A quick run down should demonstrate that the downtown of each community already has established retailing characteristics which have

developed over the years, the physical constraints of the local geography and the development which has taken place in past years.

Merchants in each community must take stock not only of the consumers they serve but of the current CBD development situation. In some cities, fairly major projects are already on the drawing boards, and while they may conform with official plans, I can assure you, they will be meaningful to the goals of the community in varying degrees. A critical factor is the availability of a major department store tenant and/or the imagined availability of such a tenant.

While the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program is still in the process of earning its spurs, one of its potential objectives is assisting the communities in assembling adequate land to provide a site for one or more major tenants. However, cities must realize that even if a downtown site were available tomorrow, a major department store is not necessarily going to build as soon as the site has been cleared. Not only does this reflect the established priorities of the major stores in dealing with these markets but it also underscores the fact that in some communities, the balance of retail power is already in the suburbs and may be expected to remain there for many years if not permanently.

While the availability of a major or even second echelon department store can give a major boost to the CBD ancillary stores, interesting programs of core area redevelopment can certainly be developed without them. What is more important, is that each community realistically appraise its potential for attracting a major tenant before embarking on a major redevelopment scheme which may lie fallow for 5 to 10 years or even longer.

The Three Common Problems

1. Available land on which to build the nucleus of a revitalized core area -

No single problem can be more complete than the multitudes of gerrymandered ownerships which are typical of all North American CBDs which date to the early 1900's or before. While it is all very well to say that expropriation procedures exist to allow urban redevelopment to take place in Ontario, a long court battle to acquire critical parcels can be political dynamite. If you get to the stage of expropriation, I can only urge that you spend some hard dollars on a first class negotiator so that the majority of land acquired can be handled through the negotiating process rather than through expropriation.

2. Automobile access - A healthy CBD must be accessible both to the residents who live close by and to those in the suburban and rural areas. A project which is inaccessible to its market is a dead project.
3. Adequate off-street parking - it does little to improve the access to the CBD if you cannot park the customers when they get there. Ideally, parking should be provided where it is needed - close to the heart of downtown activity. Suffice to say, parking problems in most of the cities have already been studied to some degree. It may well turn out, however, that this planning has taken place without regard to the basic economics of existing stores and future projects. Each city has to decide early in the game whether parking is in fact a public utility, the sole responsibility of the developer or something in between. Nothing can kill the ardour of a major tenant or potential developer for a CBD project more rapidly, nor discourage ancillary store tenants as fast as city parking requirements which raise the capital cost and related store rents out of sight. This is not to say that all cities

should carry the whole parking load. It is simply an expression of the continuing need of public bodies to at least make a stab at understanding the basic real estate requirements and cost components which can make or break any proposed development.

Up to this point, I have been reviewing some of the basics which most of us recognize but may not have tied together in our thinking. Perhaps the least understood and yet nevertheless the single most critical factor in getting any CBD project off the ground is timing. At best, even a relatively minor project involving, say, 20,000-30,000 square feet of land can be a complex undertaking for an inexperienced community. The complexity increases as projects get larger and the number of land uses increases. Urban renewal in Hamilton, Kitchener, Sudbury and Thunder Bay was a process which took 8 to 12 years from initial planning to the opening day. Considering what these cities had to go through, it is truly a miracle that the projects ever got off the ground at all. Programs for land acquisition, demolition of existing buildings, developer negotiations, planning and design, all had to take place within the terms of reference established by the federal and provincial governments and all of this had to happen with the ongoing approval of municipal councils which changed every couple of years. The sheer luck which resulted in projects coming out of the ground really staggers the imagination.

Early in the game, we were able to see that a tremendous gap existed between the public sector on the one hand and the private sector on the other in respect of the development of procedures which would allow the various parties to negotiate in an amicable fashion. We spent a lot of time developing these procedures along with many other dedicated municipal, provincial and development officials, and a lot of the thinking still applies today. But these procedures are only as good as the co-ordinating effort that brought land to the market, acceptable designs, interested major

tenants, adequate project financing in a difficult money market and government thinking at all levels which was flexible enough to bend the inadequate regulations sufficiently to permit these projects to proceed each at its own particular point of time. So if you community embarks on a program for the improvement of your central business district of any magnitude, just remember that all of the things which make the project work have got to pull together simultaneously and that if they do not, you will have to be prepared for a substantial wait before all pieces in the puzzle fit together again.

The Development Group

Such CBD redevelopment as has taken place in recent years has been some kind of partnership arrangement between the community on the one hand and the development organization on the other. Peterborough is perhaps the most recent example of this arrangement. In this instance, Marathon Realty, development arm of the CPR, cooperated with the City of Peterborough in bringing forth an imaginative, attractive, and competitive downtown project. The possibility exists that comparable projects will also evolve in the years ahead under the province's downtown revitalization program or similar scheme.

While developers of commercial real estate are showing increasing interest in downtowns across Ontario, partly as a result of the tapering off of the shopping centre building boom, much of the Canadian investment capital of the larger companies is currently being directed towards the U.S. markets where the lack of comparable restrictions makes the development process both less painful and more rewarding financially.

A recent study conducted by the International Downtown Executive Association for the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the United States examines recent development trends in twenty-five cities across the country. The New York Times note that "two-thirds of downtown executives and other sur-

veyed in the study rated office employment and not retail sales as a primary function of downtown areas. Cities with large concentrations of downtown office space had higher levels of retail sales however. The report points out that the shift of population and income from downtown areas is continuing at a rapid rate but hastens to point out that this does not necessarily mean that downtown areas could not continue to support "healthy increases in investment, office space construction and employment".

There is no doubt that the same comments are applicable in respect to our list of medium size cities. What is required is a realistic analysis of the potentials for a full spectrum of real estate uses which can lead to the evolution of a scheme of the appropriate scope.

Downtown Malls

At some point in the early 60's, many planners and architects decided more or less simultaneously that the solution to downtown renewal in many cities was simply to close off the main street and turn it into a pedestrian mall. The number of papers written on turning downtowns back to the pedestrians is well recognized. These malls have met with varying success. The Sparks Street Mall in Ottawa certainly works. I cannot say, however, how much tenant turnover there has been on this mall since it was initially put into operation. I do know however, that the arbitrary malling of city streets without specific regard to the assortment and location of tenants can be a very trying experience for many of the tenants.

When one builds a shopping centre, the location of tenants within a mall is legislated by the developer subject to some negotiation with the tenants themselves. Merchandising of space in the downtown area is more fixed due to existing leasing commitments, land ownership and the like. Both the municipality and the merchants involved should bear this factor in mind before inadvertently plunging into a mall scheme.

Availability of meaningful retail anchors at either end of the mall can add major strength to the concept. On the other hand, the absence of major anchors does not mean that a mall will not work. It simply means that more careful thought will have to be given to what should constitute an optimum tenant mix. This will usually require bringing in skills which a developer or development consultants can bring to bear on the problem. Like a new shopping centre, any downtown mall will probably take several years to hit its stride. A commitment of this type means important dollar consideration both for the community and the merchants.

Something New

Reviewing my preceding comments, I keep feeling that I am reading an elementary primer on urban redevelopment. This may well be the case, but it is equally true that most municipalities and/or merchants becoming involved in the urban redevelopment process are familiar with many of the elements mentioned without knowing how they all fit together. One of the more interesting approaches to development of the sort under consideration was attempted in Sydney, N.S. in 1963-4. In this instance, a local builder/developer formed a development company together with all of the land owners in a rather substantial portion of downtown Sydney. As I recall, land owners were allocated shares in the development based on the proportionate value of their properties to the total holding determined, I presume, by conventional appraisal techniques. The developer was to provide his skills together with some cash to make the deal work. I became involved as consultant to the developer at a time when he was approaching Eaton's to act as an anchor in the project. Unfortunately, Eaton's elected not to follow through with a major new store in this market at this time, and the developer was underfinanced. As is so often the case in situations like this, the time factor killed the developer and he was unable to hold the project together long enough to give it a try.

I do believe, however, that the formation of similar development companies in which land owners can convert their land into project equities is an area which ought to be examined more fully. It should be possible to establish a formula, perhaps as an adjunct to the Downtown Revitalization Program which is now getting into gear, whereby CBD land owners of many years standing can have the option of having their land contribution converted into an equity position in the project. The land owner would realize the full appraised value of the land and buildings as in the case of a negotiation of his land contribution at a new value supportable by the project.

Any write down in land value resulting from the difference between land and building acquisition costs and the price of the land to the developer would be recovered by the municipal and provincial governments in the usual way through tax increments and profit participation.

An interesting variation along these lines took place recently in St. Clair, Michigan a small city outside of Detroit where a specified redevelopment area was cleared and the original land owners ended up with condominium interests in a large, convenient shopping centre.

Summary

To summarize the basic underlying planning and knowledge which forms the foundation of any potential redevelopment effort is already available in most of the medium size communities of Ontario. It remains for the merchants, developers and, where necessary, government representatives at the municipal and provincial levels to reach agreement on municipal development goals and then to identify projects with a real possibility for implementation. The combined efforts of these people will then be needed to bring the necessary skills together within a reasonably flexible regulatory structure, some of which is already established, in order to allow revitalization to proceed. The flight

to the suburbs is certainly continuing throughout North America. While it may never be possible to stem this tide entirely, we can expect many more viable downtown redevelopment opportunities to be identified across Ontario in the years ahead.

1976 POPULATIONS

City/Town

Barrie	34,000
Belleville	35,000
Brantford	67,000
Chatham	38,000
Cornwall	46,000
Guelph	70,000
Kingston	61,000
Kitchener	132,000
London	247,000
Niagara Falls	69,000
North Bay	51,000
Orillia	24,000
Oshawa	106,000
Peterborough	60,000
Sarnia	55,000
St. Catharines	123,000
Sudbury	98,000
Thunder Bay	109,000
Timmins	44,000
Welland	45,000
Windsor	197,000

Source: TEIGA Municipal Directory, 1977-78

1976 POPULATIONS

CITY/TOWN	1976 POPULATION	APPROX. POPULATION IN MARKET AREA
Barrie	34,000	120,000
Belleville	35,000	135,000
Brantford	67,000	120,000
Chatham	38,000	100,000
Cornwall	46,000	85,000
Guelph	70,000	105,000
Kingston	61,000	175,000
Kitchener	132,000	300,000
London	247,000	400,000
Niagara Falls	69,000	350-400,000
North Bay	51,000	85,000
Orillia	24,000	65,000
Oshawa	106,000	200,000
Peterborough	60,000	150,000
Sarnia	55,000	120,000
St. Catharines	123,000	350-400,000
Sudbury	98,000	170,000
Thunder Bay	109,000	180,000
Timmins	44,000	80,000
Welland	45,000	350-400,000
Windsor	197,000	280-300,000

Source: 1976 Assessment populations from
TEIGA Municipality Directory, 1977-78

8.2 Profit, Success & Downtown Development

Robert H. Cook,
York Hannover Developments Ltd,
Toronto

Our company has redeveloped an 80,000 sq.ft. former department store in downtown Kitchener and built a new 25,000 sq.ft. retail office complex in downtown Welland. Both projects will be completed in fall '77 and will have 75%/85% of the retail space leased. This paper will deal with aspects of downtown projects in smaller cities based on our experience in retail development and leasing.

Small Cities are Different

The real question is what can be done successfully downtown in a smaller city of 100,000 persons or less.

A small city is not a smaller version of a large city. Cities such as Montreal and Toronto and, to a lesser degree, medium sized cities such as Kitchener and London have government offices, head offices and other major office functions of the private sector. Generally, a major office component is never located in a smaller city and, as a result, the daytime population of the small city core - even on a per capita basis - is significantly lower than a large city.

Larger cities attract department stores, hotels, live theatres and apartment buildings - components that help increase the core population in the evening.

The downtown core of the smaller community, because it does not have the built-in market of the larger metropolis, must refine its development concept. It must concentrate on those commercial activities that can be supported by a smaller population base and must be realistic about the nature and the volume of trade it can attract to the core.

Prior to the advent of regional shopping malls, downtowns virtually had the retail market to themselves. But times have changed. Our development approach to downtown is based on several salient factors regarding the competition from regional malls.

For example, regional shopping malls are heavily oriented to the female shopper. Their great strength is the effective merchandising of a number of good national chains featuring women's fashions. Women's wear chains are, generally speaking, not interested in downtown locations. Without them the core does not have as strong a draw for women as the regional mall.

There are a number of areas where the downtown

is viable and it is in these areas that we concentrate our efforts.

Commercial Uses That Thrive Downtown

(a) Male Oriented Retailers

Regional malls are not nearly as successful in attracting men as women. When men do shop at a mall, they are frequently with their wives. This, in turn, affects their behaviour as buyers.

Men, more than women, are drawn to the downtown area during the day. Without going into detail suffice to say that the plan, the office, municipal government, the pubs and restaurants all draw men into the core.

Test this theory empirically on your own city. There are probably successful men's wear, T.V. and audio stores downtown. Men will support other uses as well, such as sporting goods and camera stores. Uses such as these can be realistically supported by the existing traffic.

(b) Youth Retail

Young people look for places to spend time after school and on weekends. Girls in particular are willing to ride the bus out to the regional mall; however, it is generally conceded that the youth market is split with the downtown. Jean shops, record and tape stores and arcades for example are all viable downtown undertakings.

(c) Core Retailers

There are a number of stores and services that can be supported by the function of a downtown core. Banks and restaurants are obvious examples of viable commercial activities of this nature. There are other, less obvious retailers as well. In Welland, for example, "Beatties" operate a 3,000 sq.ft. store that features cards and books, but also does a great trade in office supplies, including everything from briefcases to office desks.

(d) Independent Women's Fashion

Because regional malls select national chains over independent fashion retailers, independents are usually found downtown. Our research indicates that many are very successful. Often an individual with talent can operate a better women's fashion store than a chain. Welland has women's fashion stores downtown that are successful because the owners have flair and can buy quickly without having to co-ordinate purchasing, shipping and promotion for 30 stores.

The foregoing is, of necessity, a generalization. The latitude of prospective uses depends on the strength of the existing core and the strength of competing malls. In Welland, for example, the fact that the major regional mall, does not have a senior department store undoubtedly gave us a broader scope downtown.

Tenant Mix

Regional malls and shopping centres must create their traffic. Mall owners must lease to anchor tenants on terms that, in effect require small tenants to subsidize them. Malls must also provide a tenant mix that generates the full range of goods and services expected in such a centre. In a core development, the centre downtown is the tenant mix. Hence, you are freed from the constraints of leasing to some tenants at uneconomical rents. We catalogue those uses that work well downtown and attach a projected rental rate to each. We then concentrate on leasing space to the high rent categories and give a lower priority to leasing to such lower rent users, for example, as hardware stores and cleaners.

The Design Concept

A downtown centre will flourish or fail on its design concept. Often a developer is faced with a piece of property that has relatively little frontage and is quite deep. In this case, there is a great temptation to "mall" it by creating a mall from the front to the rear with shops opening onto the mall. (The developer often plans for a food store or

liquor outlet at the opposite end of the street as a "draw", a concept which should be avoided. It is almost guaranteed to become a white elephant because the "draw" does not have sufficient power to generate enough traffic. As a result, the interior stores may fail.

The downtown traffic pattern is along the main street. Capitalize on this. Each store should have a main street entrance, signage, and a good display window professionally dressed. The lighting and signage should make the development come alive.

In Welland every available foot of frontage was utilized for retail use. Because each store has an entrance to the main street there is no need for common areas inside the building. Except for the second floor entrance, every square foot built is rentable. This provides a good leasing tool. Since every square foot built is leaseable, the rents can be lower. Furthermore, common area costs - which are considerable in enclosed malls - are reduced to snow plowing the parking lot and clearing the sidewalks.

To a significant degree, the merchant should be selling to the passing trade by his window displays. The display windows are extremely important. Avoid any design features which would inhibit a potential customer from window shopping. A deep set back or even a change in grade of one or two steps can have a serious effect on sales.

It will probably be impossible to fully lease the building prior to construction. As a result, design should allow for flexible store sizes. In Welland, for example, apart from window mullions, there are no verticle elements in the ground floor glazing. The building is like a salami. You can slice as much off as you want for each individual tenant. If a retailer wanted 950 sq.ft., we provide a frontage of 14 feet; if 1,400 sq.ft. is needed, 20 feet of frontage is given, and so on.

Leasing

Leasing is the single most important function in downtown development. It is also the most difficult.

Who Should Take on Leasing Responsibility?

Basically there are three choice, or a combination of three choices, for leasing: (a) a local broker; (b) a national broker with retail leasing expertise; (c) an individual hired full-time to lease the space. In our view, leasing a downtown centre is a full-time job. As a consequence, each of our developments has a full-time retail expert employed by our company specifically for leasing that particular project. We co-operate and pay commission to local brokers; however, it would be unreasonable of us to expect the commitment of time and priority toward the project that would be required. We do retain, however, a national broker with retail expertise to approach the national chains with whom he normally has a long standing relationship.

Who Are the Prospective Tenants?

With some notable exceptions the response from national chains has not been strong.

For our part, we concentrated on successful independent retailers in the neighbouring cities. In terms of Welland, for example, it is much easier to convince a successful retailer from St. Catharines or Niagara Falls to expand to Welland than it would be to sell a Welland merchant with the prospect of moving down the street at a higher rent. On the other hand, there is practically no point in approaching a retailer in Toronto. He would rightly ask, why should he move to Welland instead of such closer cities as Hamilton or Kitchener.

Spend some time with people who are not, but would like to be in the retail business. The regional malls, with their propensity for national chains, shut out people like these. There are many talented entrepreneurs that

could be particularly attractive tenants, especially in mens and womens fashion.

How To Lease

i. Know Your Product

Know the downtown potential. Speak to the bankers; without revealing confidences, they should be able to tell you the annual volumes of the successful retailers in the core. Study the downtowns of neighbouring cities; find examples of successful retailers there and find out what their annual volumes would be.

ii. Develop Responses to Traditional Hurdles

There are a number of objections which are raised by most tenants. There are effective responses. Two will be dealt with here: "downtown is dying" and "the rent is too high".

When we first started in Welland, we were continually confronted with the comment that the downtown is dead. During construction, both Kresge's and Woolworth's vacated their premises on the main street. In response, we explained that Kresge's and Woolworth's moved out as a result of a corporate decision probably made in the 1960's to close Kresge's and Woolworth's stores in markets covered by K-Mart and Woolco. It has nothing to do with lack confidence in downtown Welland. Elaborate on successful downtowns. London, Niagara On-The-Lake, Yonge Street north of Eglinton (midtown Toronto), for example, all have attractive elements that could profitably be applied to the smaller city.

A prospective tenant would not be normal if he did not complain about the rent. You may require \$8.00 per sq.ft. Help him establish a projected income and expense statement for year one based upon your knowledge of what the good retailers in the city generate in volumes together with your knowledge of what his

retail trade can do in volume. If the retailer knows he will do a good volume, then \$8.00 per sq.ft. should not disturb him.

iii. Leasing Must be Persistent and Creative

In Welland we met with one potential tenant every week for three months before he signed. It is a slow process. Be innovative. So long as the rental amount remains satisfactory, do everything to tailor the deal to the tenant's needs. For example, we have a prospective tenant in a youth-oriented retail business who knows he can make money in Welland. He has the product, the bank line and the merchandising. However, he can't be in two places at once and he is uneasy about the possibility of success if his Welland operation were left to a young manager and salesman. We suggested a franchise operation. A franchisee would put up some money and then have the incentive to manage and sell well. We developed the franchise concept, put the economic projections together, created a brochure and found a number of good possible franchisees. Hopefully we will now benefit by having a successful retailer. Nothing is too much trouble.

8.3 Retail Can Survive Without Major Anchors

Tom Hammond,
Thomas Hammond & Associates,
Toronto

Over the last 20 years we have watched the rapid suburban growth in many communities and equally rapid development of neighbourhood, community and regional shopping centres to meet those new customer demands. We have witnessed the dramatic affect that a well anchored regional shopping centre can have on the overall community affecting traffic patterns, transit systems, decentralization of community facilities, and attraction of business away from former local retail areas.

In essence, the creation of a convenient,

comfortable environment offering a full variety of merchandise and prices - induced completely by the transient automobile-oriented society we have lived in over the last few years - has literally changed the shopping habits of North America. Although still well anchored with major department stores in many instances, we have watched the downtown cores of many major cities throughout Canada and the U.S. weaken, wither, decay, and in many instances, die.

The redevelopment of downtown communities has not intentionally been ignored, but forms part of the evolution of the shopping centre and retail industry in that the potential for downtown redevelopment was not nearly as attractive as the large undeveloped regional site in the suburbs. The economic feasibility of most new, less complicated shopping centres far outweighed the potential for downtown communities.

Isn't it interesting, that in the evolution of our development industry, we now find ourselves in recent years, looking at the redevelopment and refurbishment of our cities, with projects such as Pacific Centre, Eaton Centre, Peterborough Square, and many others, as a result of having filled all the market needs for shopping centres for the moment.

In this normal evolution, we now find a new chapter unfolding: a review by municipalities, developers, lenders and retailers of the many small communities and cities as to the potential for redevelopment of their downtown cores.

We have found that there are many communities that have been untouched or that have survived and indeed have prospered, with or without anchors, in spite of the lure of all the competition, from local or regional shopping centres.

Before we attempt to lay any blame on councils, planners and developers for ignoring all these smaller communities and for the sorry state of many downtown core retail areas to-day - and indeed before rushing into a program of

revitalization of some of these downtown situations, we must take a most careful and cautious look, and analyze more carefully some of the reasons and factors that can and have influenced the success or failure of downtown before rushing into a program of downtown revitalization.

As a result of my current involvement as a private developer in Thunder Bay, I thought it would be interesting to relate that city's approach to each of my comments. Obviously their approach is unique to Thunder Bay but I believe one that is a most interesting and desirable format for any smaller community.

Most prudent developments have been conceived and have been supported by demographic and market research studies which have proved the economic viability of the projects. As a result, except in certain instances, there has not been a detrimental effect on the potential business available for downtown retail sales. In looking therefore at the potential redevelopment of any smaller community, the same philosophy should be applied and the same studies undertaken to support such redevelopment. I would suggest before embarking too far on any specific program that the basic economic feasibility be seriously explored, to insure the success on completion of the project, utilizing the best professional talent suitable.

The planned redevelopment of the South Core of Thunder Bay is based on a number of different studies which ascertain the development potential within the redevelopment area. The study established such things as the need for new underground services, the amount of additional retail space that could be absorbed, and the most importantly identified, the most suitable location for development to take place within their plan. This approach allowed decisions to be made based on facts rather than on hypothetical or emotional basis or other personal influences.

We all know that downtowns which are well anchored with major retail department stores,

office buildings and central residential have been able to sustain some of the highest levels of sales, sometimes to the detriment of the competitive suburban or semi-urban shopping centres. The reason for this is obvious. The people population created during working hours as well as the support of downtown residential along with the draw from the suburbs, creates the number of people and the available dollars to support these high levels of sales. I suggest therefore, that along with the aforementioned studies, that the market potential and economic viability of such adjunct projects to support retail development be explored very seriously in your program.

Relating to Thunder Bay, in this instance, part of their overall analysis of downtown redevelopment included an independent study of housing requirements, and part of those requirements have been allocated within the downtown core. In addition they have encouraged within the private development section associated with the redevelopment scheme, the addition of office space to act as part of the rejuvenation, and as support for the basic retail development, being added by private owners.

In recent years, we have experienced an expanding economy with cost of living increases in sales volumes in the retail industry. This allowed all to share in a bigger pie. The instability of our current economy and the inability to absolutely determine what the future holds I think should caution us to look most carefully at any projects considered to insure the soundness of the whole scheme.

In relation to Thunder Bay, it has been a well known fact that from most market studies done in the last few years that a substantial number of dollars normally allocated to retail sales are not spent within the community. Some of these are obviously in savings accounts, but a large total are spent in either Winnipeg, Toronto, or Duluth, where people journey on frequent shopping sprees to buy items not offered within the community. It has

also been a well known fact for many years that the same broad merchandise offering available to most of us in our local communities are not offered in Thunder Bay. These circumstances not only allow a cushion in the addition of more retail space but opportunity for tenants not represented to join in the renewal program.

Well established local merchants offering a high degree of quality and value as well as personal attention, need no special location and have survived and prospered in existing downtown locations of any community.

Merchants who are aggressive and promotionally oriented and who are prepared to offer the same competitive qualities, values and personal attention, can only add to the downtown business core, and prosper as well.

In relation to the South Core project in Thunder Bay, the scheme started at the request of the downtown businessmen's association, who felt that something needed to be done. It was their request to planning and council that originally got the ball rolling for redevelopment.

Parking: We all know the problems of parking on main street on a rainy day with the closest parking lot being two blocks away from our intended destination. We probably won't stop and make that purchase we intended to. In any plan of redevelopment, convenient, economical, accessible parking with a minimum number of levels if decked, well lit and preferably with covered walkways and elevators as required must be considered a key point in your planning.

Through the studies completed and decisions made for the Thunder Bay redevelopment, it became obvious that to add additional retail, office and residential in the downtown core without adequate parking could not work. As a result thereof, within the scheme are planned parking garages to support private sector development to be phased when this development takes place.

Transportation: As in some communities where all roads and all buses go downtown and as we look to current costs of fuel and automobiles, it seems to make reasonable good sense to do a proper transportation study of your community - considering a new terminus - or a junction point - for all routes to be connected to the downtown core. These, like parking, should offer covered customer and employee access direct to the retail areas and/or places of employment where possible.

Planned into the Thunder Bay program is a new terminus bringing public transportation literally to the entrance doors of the new mall; an important ingredient and valuable consideration for the future.

Environments: Must be considered in downtown situations that offer more than sidewalks and street front stores. Whether this is climate controlled and enclosed, or only sidewalks covered with decorative canopies offering a pleasant designed atmosphere for the customer's enjoyment is irrelevant as long as the new character exists to make shoppers enjoy the visit and return. Excellent examples of this are Yorkville and Hess Village in Hamilton that survive and have grown based on character yet offering only a variety of unique specialty stores.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Thunder Bay renewal scheme is that the scheme provides the environment for private sector development. Nearly all new construction and developments will be done by private owners. To clarify that, the city is providing street environment made up of large sections of enclosed climate-controlled streets connected with open streets with covered sidewalks and connecting canopies for shopper comfort and convenience. This is certainly a departure from the large tract building expropriation route creating large open areas in the downtown for development. It therefore limits the capital investment to those specific items of environment and support plus certain unique requirements related to any such development.

Regulations as we now know must be reviewed in accordance with the needs of the downtown as related to zoning, parking, coverages, and building heights. I am certainly not suggesting a carte blanche developer arrangement, but an absolute relation to the specific needs of downtown - as well as a direct comparison of present assessment to new assessment on the proposed development. With the normally high cost of land in downtown cores, most good developers will not proceed unless the project makes economic sense. - LISTEN - THE MODIFICATIONS TO YOUR NORMAL RULES AND REGULATIONS MAY ALLOW THE PROJECT TO WORK TO THE DEVELOPER'S BENEFIT AND ULTIMATELY TO ALLOW AN INVIGORATED DOWNTOWN, WITH THE LONG TERM ASSESSMENT FROM THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

With respect to regulations in the Thunder Bay situation, I have touched on some of the things they have done which are slightly abnormal to a downtown development in that they have requested that office space be provided above any retail, they are providing the parking to support the retail, and they have allowed deviations from normal side yards and coverages, but I must point out only to the extent that it fits within the criteria that have been established for the downtown redevelopment plan. In other words, any open site or building existing must conform to the overall criteria and plan, which can be modified with the development authority only after serious discussion. Speaking as a developer, I would say that there certainly are advantages but one has to work at it with the authority to establish that your development fits within the overall criteria for the redevelopment program and that it can work for you. In this case, there has been attention to the needs of the developer's requirements on behalf of the project and his future tenants, yet giving away very little.

One of the more important points I have left to the last is one of Commitment. We must not forget the participants in any scheme rely on profits, and therefore the machinery and organization must be set up to give continuity

to the plan - therefore gaining the confidence of the business community in insuring it will proceed regardless of council or staff changes or outside influences. Without this tenants owners or developers, and especially investment lenders cannot make their commitment in return.

The above are some of my thoughts which I believe, if considered, in any contemplated revitalization plan, can go a long way to overcome COMPLACENCY

- of existing tenants who feel or see no need to improve
- of new tenants who would not otherwise consider a location in downtown
- of developers and lenders who may not otherwise see a viable economic development in downtown
- of the residentail population who may have forgotten there is a downtown.

In summation, a properly considered plan, scaled to suit your community, offering whatever degree of character, environment, parking and support facilities that you can provide - along with the COMPROMISE to allow certain freedoms of development within a planned criteria will certainly attract a greater interest from lenders, tenants and developers to your community.

There is great evidence attesting to these points and the most interesting scheme that Thunder Bay has embarked upon, and which I am privileged to be participating in.

I believe there is investment potential in the downtown. I believe that retail can survive without major anchors and without normal shopping centre facilities, but first, we must all do our homework, to insure that the plan is equitable and feasible for the municipality, developers and owners, lenders and above all the tenants who will pay the rent.



The downtown as the community centre **9**

9.1 "Things Fall Apart The Centre Cannot Hold"

Barry Thorne,
Queen's University

I am reminded today of the words of the Irish poet Yeats, discussing what he saw as the disintegration of the modern world before World War Two: "Things," he said, "fall apart, the centre cannot hold."

Since the second world war, Yeats' words have had special relevance to the fate of downtown cores in North America. For various reasons, they were perceived to be dying. A host of evolutionary forces contributed to their neglect and decay, and sometimes even death. As the years passed, many downtown cores became scruffy, dirty, sometimes dangerous places where people did not care to go. Vital businesses did not locate within them. Vacancy signs proclaimed their illness, and revised traffic patterns bypassed them. The social problems associated with this kind of arterial sclerosis were unmistakable. Increased crime rates. Skid rows. And a lack of community spirit.

Fortunately, downtown cores did not die. The dismal picture is slowly being revised. For a new set of evolutionary reasons, it is now desirable to preserve and maintain old downtown cores. For example, it is cheaper and wiser to renovate and restore in today's economic climate than to demolish and rebuild. Modern zoning bylaws may in fact prohibit non-conforming uses on the same location after demolition. A higher transportation costs and property taxes impact on the suburbs, downtown cores have regained their potential as middle class residential areas. It is now increasingly necessary to move closer together or to combine the work place and the living place.

More important, perhaps, is that fact that we have rediscovered the need for identity and character in the life of the community. Canadians are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for identity. In this instance,

the importance of the downtown core as a key to the identity of a community is now being recognized. In Kingston, the downtown core supplies the identity for the community. When people think of the city, they think of its heart: the downtown waterfront area, where most of the city's oldest buildings are located, including City Hall.

Kingston's City Hall, built in 1842, is an excellent symbol of the core as the focus of the community. This noble old stone building was originally conceived as a community centre housing a tavern, a Post Office, a bank, lawyers' offices, the local market, and a slaughter house.

In other words, in the nineteenth century, Kingston's City Hall was a multi-purpose centre combining municipal business with other activities of the community. Fortunately, in its recent renovation, the city fathers continued this important function, and City Hall is still a people-place for display and community gathering. Numerous city organizations make use of the building for their meetings and events eighteen hours a day. And the colourful farmers' market is still held in the parking area adjoining the building to the west.

The recent history of Kingston's core area documents the prototype of a dying downtown core. Sydenham Ward, which makes up most of the core, suffered from deterioration and decay in the 1940's and 1950's but has experienced a steady rise back to life and health during the past 15 years or so. Middle class families have moved back into the area, bought up many of the big old houses formerly converted to apartments, and restored them to single or double family residences.

It is essential that every community possess such a heart or focal point. Kingston has one, the adjoining municipality does not. And the difference is apparent. Because of rapid growth, bulldozer planning,

and multiplication of subdivisions, Kingston Township lacks a natural social centre or hub with which its residents may identify. So the township council is looking for a means of creating one. Its members hope, in fact, that a controversial proposed regional shopping centre will do the job for them.

The image of most small communities, clearly comes from their downtown. It is fair to say that, in communities of low or no growth, it is more important to maintain the image of downtown, than to accomplish anything else.

However, the small communities have the greatest difficulty in dealing with large systems and have the least money for renovation and improvement. As well they are most dependent on large institutions and governments. Government involvement, perhaps along the lines of the Mainstreet Alberta funding scheme, is required. But government involvement is a two-edged sword and must preserve a delicate balance of supportive planning, technical advice, and funding.

Small communities, Kingston included, have suffered in the past from having big-city thinking imposed upon them, when it may not in fact have been desirable. Big-city thinking may have helped to turn some cores into the empty, windy, barnlike areas they are after business hours.

Kevin Lynch's important work on the image of the city should help us here. Lynch asked how people identify with their physical environment and discovered they can identify with the block where they live, shop or work.

Kingstonians identify with City Hall, Queen's University, the downtown waterfront, and the Old Stones in Sydenham Ward. A strong identification of this type may well have something to do with a community's sense of well-being. Kingston is fortunate, of course to possess a strong architectural and historical ident-

ification which gives popular support to Heritage Canada and various attempts to preserve old structures.

A successful downtown core must obviously be an attractive people-place where activities occur and people appear spontaneously; a place where "monumentality" does not discourage people from making frequent use of it and of feeling comfortable within its environs.

For many Ontario communities this is not an impossible task, but there are some crucial prerequisites. The minds and hearts of the people must be behind the attempt. This is why government intervention alone is not enough. There must be general agreement on goals, and a masterplan to guide the activities of individuals.

The attitudes of people, naturally, must be supportive, or the road to revitalization will be entirely uphill. The way a community perceives its downtown core is of course fundamental. If people do NOT find the downtown a pleasant place to go, then something constructive must be done to alter that attitude. If the downtown merchants are not part of the solution, they may be part of the problem.

Where does a community apply pressure to encourage or force change? Will a blitz on the downtown merchants do the trick? Maybe not, because the average merchant does not own the premises within which his business operates. While he may recognize that his retail strength lies in customer appeal, he may not see the necessity for an attractive store front modified along the lines of a community masterplan. And who is to pay for improvements? If the owner, who is possibly absentee, sees no need to plow more funds into his property, no one else is likely to do so.

Kingston suffers from absentee landlordism, though the land speculation tax has had some influence on the situation. Many landlords have been merely sitting on their investment

in the core area. For two basic reasons, it has not been to their benefit to improve their premises. First, to do so would have triggered a tax reassessment which could only have cost them more money. And second they were holding onto old buildings solely for the value of their frontage on the main street at some future time. When this is the case, a core can hardly escape decay.

The people of the community must be behind restoration of the city core, but they must know what the aim is. Here many communities miss the mark. They fail to define objectives and also fail to evolve a master strategy to accomplish their goals. The result is a piecemeal approach likely to produce anomalies and peculiar developments alien to the spirit and character of the community.

Once a plan is evolved, it's important to concede that a downtown can be a village. That is, there is no reason why residential, commercial, and public uses of buildings and land in the cores cannot be compatible. In fact, their mingling may be essential.

Outdoor winter skating in downtown Toronto is a symptom of the developments in that city's core. It was essential that the new city hall be located in downtown Toronto, instead of elsewhere. And other communities should keep in mind that a deliberate program to mingle facilities in the downtown is one of the avenues to increased use of the downtown.

Libraries, churches, schools and government buildings complement retail stores and parks. There is no reason why the places where people go, like key facilities and institutions, should not be downtown. But locating things downtown is not enough. If people are to live and work downtown, transportation and parking are critical factors in the equation. Downtowns need people living and spending in them. Traffic patterns which route cars around the core or speed them through do not help. Who wants to revitalize a freeway? In many communities, movie theatres are located

downtown. As a result, people come to the core at night to see a film. Downtowns must therefore capitalize on the fact that large numbers of people come downtown at peak periods. What can these people do, if most stores in the core are closed at 5:30 or 6 o'clock?

The parking issue and the creation of partial or full malls downtown are linked. It is impossible to remove on-street parking in the core, if alternatives are not provided. This means that modification of consumer shopping habits is dependent on parking. Many people prefer to go to large suburban malls where parking is easy and the weather remains outside.

Core revitalization is working in Kingston. The reasons are many. City council is generally favourable. Individual merchants are making impressive contributions toward the restoration of key old buildings. Victoria and Grey Trust Company has restored its limestone building. Howard Sly of Dacon Corporation has converted a downtown hotel to an interior mall. Len Dover has renovated an old brick building into a sophisticated men's store and converted the city's old Fire Hall into a magnificent new restaurant. New zoning bylaws protect the core by limiting the types of construction and facilities allowed. And a series of mayors have labored to encourage the multiple use of waterfront property and growth of downtown. The provincial government is cooperating by moving its O.H.I.P. offices to the core. The community at large generally supports revitalization. And major institutions, like banks and trust companies, have located offices downtown.

With the example of Kingston, it seems that several avenues are open to a community considering revitalization. If the spirit is lacking, a push from outside may be helpful. Various levels of government must be involved, and a masterplan is essential. Examples are needed. They can be the ideas of private individuals, or they can take the form of city incentives. The city can buy and restore a building. It can make legal

or tax concessions to encourage the renovation of old buildings. Or a seed project under a federal or provincial umbrella can provide both model and inspiration. Downtown revitalization is working in many communities. So it can also work in your community. What you need are the goals of the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and the Cowardly Lion: brains, heart, leadership, and courage. Money of course, but when you have the former, your chances of getting the latter are much better.

9.2 "People Must Feel Part of Downtown"

Margaret Lawson,
New York, New York

How do you use the excitement of a fresh idea, Downtown as Community Centre? How do you use it to create citizen involvement and commitment?

One of the ways, of course, is to take to the streets . . . literally, and to use street events to focus attention. If your downtown streets have been getting emptier or are simply deserted, stop thinking of them as traffic lanes. . . and think of them as a stage, think of them as people places - galleries.

The important thing to remember is that you have to communicate how real people fit in. You have to say downtown is for people and repeat it.

And make sure your actions and your rules and regulations say the same thing, no point in saying, "Welcome" when at every turn there is a barrier which says "No Trespassing."

Some years ago, when the city of Atlanta decided that 85 years of lying low was enough, the city businessmen launched a marketing and promotion program with some very specific objectives. One of the cardinal elements was a national relations program whose first purpose was feed-back

. . . to create a feeling of pride and commitment in their town among local citizens.

The "Forward Atlanta" program has been studied, adapted, copied slavishly, but no matter how large or small I have not seen one city who fully grasped that essential part of the development process. . . community pride, pride of place.

In the past 16 years I have seen many redevelopment programs for downtowns. I have been involved in many myself. And I can think of no single program which recognized what Atlanta had built into its mix.

To say that downtown is a community centre, to make creation of a good community centre an essential part of all planning is money in the bank.

A heartening number of people these days have taken to dancing in the streets. They also play jazz, and sculpt, and weave and paint and pot. Remarkable numbers sell their crafts, their art, the contents of attics of barns, the produce of gardens and farms; they display miniature railroads and antique cars, stamps and celebrated jumping frogs.

Some downtown streets resemble off-track branches of college athletic fields with international bicycle races, skateboard competitions, moped rallies, kite flying contests. Early morning is apt to find a clog of joggers. Noontime is apt to find a tennis demonstration in the middle of a new plaza or mall. And downtowns are beginning to sport skating signs not only in the new outdoor rink but on the second floor of solid old lofts where figure skating can be done all year.

Increasingly streets are closed for a day or week-end for incredibly varied street fairs where sampling from every kitchen is done at small stalls, an essential part of the action.

Downtown neighbourhoods arrange block festivals one after another. And at one time or another our major thoroughfares resemble nothing so much as a medieval market place complete with food stalls, jugglers, fortune tellers, mimes and troubadours.

What is happening, of course, is the recreation of the long lost street life, with its unique mix of trade and food and amusement. Essential requirement is that the street belongs to everyone and all doors are open.

It is a celebration of community.

Creating a downtown bazaar is usually difficult, often messy, always a headache. Where it works, it creates excitement, vitality. Downtown becomes a people palce, not merely a bad reputation. Events catalyze commitment, personal involvement, investment.

How?

Tough committee work. . .two committeees - one of workers (borrowed from business and the arts) one of top executives - for arm twisting and dollar pulling. That man has an empty cot, that one a third floor loft . . .ask them in lieu of money.

What makes it work?

The trick is to create theatre plus. Begin with official sponsorship of concerts, and exhibits and demonstrations. What work is repeated? A long term calendar is a must. Design the events so that the participants have an interest in encore.

Transition can be quick. Special interest sponsorship is your goal. In Manhattan, for example, restaurateurs, to demonstrate their patriotism and civic pride and to show off their field, run a "Taste of the big apple", and half a million attend. It spreads.

Neighbourhoods take over. Arts groups volunteer. Individuals set up stalls to show

crafts and test the market for their services. Mimes and musicians, in time-honored tradition, try out the act. Overall comes a happy people watching and a new awareness of neighbour as talent of interest.

An old set of ideas is being polished.

Downtown is fun.

Downtown is Community.

Downtown is alive.

Downtown is something I can touch and share.

Downtown is opportunity.

Downtown is an open door.

Remember downtown is a state of mind.

The ideal fall-out from a successful program of community events is individual investment. You want people to move from being spectators to becoming participants, to a new awareness of downtown worth and downtown need.

Action catalyzes action. Retailers who have lain like beached whales on downtown streets become creators of spectacle themselves. They can turn whole floors into civic arenas and galleries. One retailer in Philadelphia refuses to sponsor any store event which is not for a charity or civic good. Inevitably his events draw in the suburban resident.

Vivid community action creates another desirable fall-out. Downtown plants begin to reconsider moving out, examine ways to stay.

Successful community street events can precipitate the swing to downtown living. For "community" is an important reason for the shift to innercity. The economic advantage of big, solid houses at reasonable price is the compelling motive, but community is the bonus.

Community is what attracts executives from corporate jobs and suburban homes. The voiced need is for a community of manageable size. What is wanted, what happens is settlement in a small downtown and establishment of a small business. It is characteristic of these returnees to downtown that they are nose-pokers-in. They mind the business of the town council. They form action committees. Getting involved is the attraction, and a sort of community barn raising is often the result.

You better be talking to the people who want to move in, the people who think living downtown, starting a small business downtown is what they want.

If the tide is turning for downtown, it is running best, moving swiftly where this vivid sense of community is being built into all planning, and nourished in all promotion. Coming in on that tide are attitudes and ideas which have had little enough currency in our time. They can be fuel to kindle and set burning in your downtown.

First, a new old idea that downtown has a unique special function and is not just a dinosaur left over from another age.

Second, downtown and suburbia are part of one whole.

Third, downtown to many people is the appropriate place to live and work - an assumption too long ignored and thus unsupported by effort or investment.

Fourth, downtown is identity and history - which oldest resident and newest can see as common interest. One is not from Hither Hills or Elm Stree but from a mail address with character. Pride in place is worth promoting.

Fifth, downtown is unity. It should not be too hard to point out that all over suburbia bits and pieces of essential community functions have had to be created in churches and schools, which work better downtown.

These are ideas with power. They are not new, but newly appreciated and can bring a whole new set of influences to your support.

And community is something everyone seeks most. I believe that half the strength of suburban retailing has been in the willingness to serve community needs. Half the traffic in any mall is non-shopper. Teens come to meet and talk, the elderly to sit and window shop and chat. Yet in most malls they are welcomed and treated as if they were customers, and some shops and services they need are added.

How many downtowns promote at all? And how many to the loiterer, the window shopper? How very few promote to the street watcher, and provide a seat! Yet that is what downtown is all about . . . The spectacle of people in all their actions.

Events alone will not create community. The downtown executive could be saddled for life with the job of impressario to an eternal passive audience. People stand and watch parades and leave, having spent the while with their backs to retail. Or, they attend a performance and leave.

Stages are often dark: civic and convention centres must constantly promote audience. For YOU, downtown show business must be designed to create involvement and individual and group commitment. Your aim is to make not only traffic but to encourage people to become part of the process of change.

A check list for making a community of a downtown might include:

1. Create a new idea - We have been selling disaster for years. The idea is clear that downtown is dismal. New York, now, promotes the big apple - apples are wholesome, handsome, tasty and simple; Cleveland, after lying like a wreck for a generation only now promotes downtown as part of everyone, pushes for volunteer corps

to help; Louisville businessmen run public service ads which promote downtown as uptown, the most exciting of places; uptown of downtown, you have to create for hundreds or hundreds of thousands a new idea about downtown - safe, exciting, and "mine". This is a lesson best learned by doing.

2. Create action which encourages involvement.
3. Think of downtown as its own community with its own identity. Talk to neighbours.
4. Remove attitudinal barriers to involvement and re-examine every rule and regulations that hinders people using downtown.
5. Re-examine every priority. Think now as well as 1985, because community action may hold the whole thing together in the interim.
6. Put pedestrian back in your vocabulary.
7. Promote. Don't wait until later; it will be too late.

Communicate

The great advantage of events is that they communicate without language.

Making downtown come alive as a community centre asks for a lot of communication both verbal and in action. It requires a new vocabulary. For downtown has been downgraded, its future too clouded by doom and gloom for individuals to grasp a potential for life.

The message needs repeating.

And, if you are going to sell downtown to people you have to talk people language. Experts talk jargon. They speak, with profes-

sional necessity, of parking spaces and square feet of office space, of hotel rooms and hospital beds. There are not too many people, unfortunately, who will recognize themselves as hospital beds. And selling downtown as a great place to be is not exactly winning.

We talk categories of people - the elderly, students, office employees, shoppers, bus riders, and endlessly we speak of automobiles, as if they operated independently of the human drivers. The unfortunate result is we tend to forget the elderly can also be shoppers, joggers, students, craftsmen. . .

Categorizing is what leads to downtown's isolating solutions - offices here, elderly there, poor on that side, government nicely organized in this square. To have community the bridges have to be repaired. It is the street which offers the human pathway. Destroy the street to create barriers, for whatever functional reason, and the community staggers.

To me it seems, therefore, extremely vital that the community function of downtown be set up as the most important yardstick for development or change. Only then can we avoid that other set of barriers which we experts tend to establish for mere humans to hurdle.

Having created functions for people, we tell them how and under what circumstances they can use them. We establish absolutes, often petty tyrannies. . . on the assumption humans will litter our new treasures we allow no food, no dogs, no children.

Highway departments develop the ideal traffic mover and encircle downtown with five lane zoomways which make access a hazard hardly worth risking. Health departments issue a ukase against all outdoor eating. Vanished the street peddler. Gone the street cafe. No salmonella, but not much fun either.

Merchants, frantic for business get the city council to ban street peddlers, ignoring the proven fact that street life stimulates sales.

When it is a value to make the downtown a community experience there is a criterion in hand to extract concessions from the expert tyrants. If not, talk and persuasion and events will not precipitate any commitment . . .because your actions belie the words.

The community value or yardstick might also bring into better perspective the constant attempt to reshape downtown against the logic of its multiple functions. Today the theme is that retail having disappeared, downtown is for government and offices. There is not a lot to attract interest of the average citizen in a community centre strictly for offices.

Nor is it reasonable to see office and government employees as functions without any recreation, dining, shopping needs in common with other downtown residents and users. Downtown as office park is downtown nine to five.

There is one other barrier to downtown's becoming alive and vital. That is the obsession with automobile, to the extent that parking garages are often designed and built before the hospitals or theatres or schools or offices they will serve. Too often they are built against the interests of the street, which is to say pedestrian/human.

There are downtowns which have twice the needed parking, with resultant deadening of life. Yet every new facility poses the same idea. . .another garage. Why? Because research shows people will not walk more than two blocks?

A. It is not true. Demonstrably it is not true.

B. If it were, there is no excuse for destroying downtown in catering to such nonsense.

Consider first those non-walkers, the suburbanites.

Aren't they those people who jog three, six, nine miles each morning, and play tennis most afternoons, certainly half the day Saturday? They are the ones who in a suburban mall about three city blocks from the door and walk two to six miles inside.

They are the very same ones who ski all winter, or skate, take dancing lessons for exercise. . .The same who hike and take walking tours of foreign cities. Have you ever heard any such person refuse to visit Paris because there is no parking place?

Unless and until community interests take a precedence in value, it will be difficult to establish pedestrian. Yet all the evidence is clearly on your side. The downtowns you like to visit, be they in resorts or great cities are almost always walk-around places.

Furthermore, the places you like to visit are first entire unto themselves. In small fishing villages or in big cities like Paris, London, Rome, Amsterdam, Bangkok, Tokyo, Toronto, or New York. . .the restaurants and the shops are for the people who live there. The citizens live over the store, back of the hotel or theatre. Their children go to school around the corner and play in the parks.

Downtown is not for people functions: it is for people of all sorts in all their interest which is what makes them work and retain their fascination.

Fail to make downtown first a complete place for the downtown residents and it will have no pull for anyone else. Ignoring the

downtowners, residents or daytime workers, can be fatal, in fact.

One downtown mall in the United States is a clear disaster. Developed with private funds and great enthusiasm, opened with fanfare, it has gone downhill ever since. Because against a device to lure the suburbanite back downtown, everyone already downtown or who possibly might be attracted was ignored: students at high schools, technical schools, community colleges did not exist. Nor did the several thousand professional and office people.

The black and the elderly in new housing downtown have neither community centre nor retailing services other than on the mall. Yet their presence was neither planned, welcome, nor ever considered an asset.

A new mall with ugly buildings surrounding it in four years was never the object of a paint-up/touch-up campaign. Old buildings were never encouraged into recycling, nor were empty lofts offered for use by artists. There is no surer way to get traffic, create galleries and other retail than to provide good artists with loft space. Yet the mall's management would not hear any suggestion. The mind-set was in one direction only.

Which is not to say suburbanites cannot be lured downtown to shop. In one city a small, old community of labourers homes was seized by two top flight decorators because it was inexpensive office space. One used an old grocery with apartment above for display and workrooms.

Their customers came downtown. An old bakery was scheduled to be torn down, and one of the decorators bought it, prevailed upon his friends to start shops, and within seven months the shops were thriving, the old factory was on the tourist bus route.

The same project could have been established on that mall, but the sponsors' eyes were on development - a convention centre, a galleria. Nowhere in the thinking was there room for people.

In the same city, however, six blocks away, 800 junior league women in need of new quarters bought a gutted cast iron warehouse, hired a superior architect, approved a good design, and won national honors for their effort, they incidentally gained good space, created a playroom for their children and opened it to the neighbourhood, created a public gallery and two meeting rooms which were much needed and valued by businessmen, and at street level they created a chapel.

The Junior League presence tipped decisions to convert another major building on main street to a natural history museum. They came to contribute. They found downtown easier for all to reach. They precipitated restaurants and shops to serve them. But not once did they hesitate because there was no parking.

They came because their need coincided with something their city, their community centre wanted and needed, namely preservation of some valuable structures. And their headquarters is a tourist attraction and the pride of the whole community.

There are dozens of examples of ways in which community as a positive value can be fed. One successful repertory theatre has 11,000 subscribers because it has played the community game brilliantly, to its own and downtown's advantage.

First, it is in a landmark old building downtown demonstrating concern for the core and taste.

Secondly, it yearly holds coffee klatches with every neighbourhood to get subscribers . . . Bringing them into downtown.

Thirdly, it tailors its programs to what the community will accept, content to build an audience.

Fourth, it works in and with the schools. Fifth, it has a second theatre for experiemntal plays for the fewer subscribers who will take Pinter and Brecht.

Many theatres move into costly new palaces, or, die because they will not adapt to community tastes and insist on abstruse repertoires only.

I give you Louisville, Kentucky which some years ago completed a large riverfront plaza and belvedere with a hotel, an office and two banks. The core is a sixteen hundred car garage on three levels designed to be flooded. This spans the flood plain and allows a park of eleven acres to stretch to the river. The original idea was to give the river back to people.

Completed, the decision was made among the business leadership that the belvedere would be opened with a ribbon cutting by the Governor, right after he left the annual "They're Off" luncheon. This marks the beginning of the Kentucky Derby Festival.

Great! If 1,000 people attend a luncheon at least 100 should come to a ribbon cutting. And ribbon cutting do attract some people . . .the same people who go to stranger's weddings and funerals, and flock to disasters.

We persuaded the committee charged with managing this new facility, a commission of some stature, that a multimillion facility deserved its own spot in history. Opening should be an occasion to invite citizens, notably children. The mayor should dedicate the belvedere and plaza to all the children in perpetuity as their home place.

"No", said the downtown executives.
"No", said the commission. "Great", replied the mayor.

Against some opposition, you might conclude, we invited children from every school,

including schools four minutes away in non-tax paying southern Indiana, to enter a drawing competition. Two children would be chosen from each school to appear at the opening, on the basis of a painting or drawing of my belvedere.

By the weekend the traffic in children with parents as transport, was something noticeable. They poured into the hotel and through the bank to come see "Their Belvedere". Else, how could they possibly draw it?

On opening day the children came, received their gift, and the traffic began in earnest. They came and came and came. They waded in the pools and dodged in and out of the fountains.

The managers shut off the water. Health codes were involved and wading was banned. Newspapers had a field day, and more people came. A council woman came to wade in defiance of an old, old rule. Public controversy!

The people won and a successful community centre was born.

This summer 260,000 people attended 13 weeks of events on the same belvedere and plaza. The heritage weekends are created by ethnic communities to demonstrate their unique foods, arts, history. Each offer such a taste of good food that Louisville's interest in ethnic food has grown and the level of restaurants has improved.

The University of Louisville now has a well-funded ehnic heritage program. And a dozen communities have become one community.

It may have been that a mere insignificant ribbon cutting would have stimulated the same life for the downtown community centre with is the belvedere. But the idea that it belonged to everyone and was to be enjoyed, with forbidden foods, was not originally on the plans or in the minds of the commission.

It was a community idea that had to be pushed.

I give you a case history of disaster.

In the southeast United States there is a community of about 240,000 people whose downtown has virtually no pulse. It is barely alive.

You might envy this town. There are no slums, although there is poverty. There is good public housing.

There are good roads. There is a handsome park. There are two inner city residential areas of intelligent influential people, and one is a large, historic 18th century area which is a potential tourist attraction.

There is a new courthouse, new municipal building, new library, new office. There is also a brand new, three-storey garage smack in the middle of the court house square where the village green ought to be. There is a civic centre which has broken even in its first 18 months.

The new Hilton Hotel is thinking of expanding to accomodate the civic centre traffic in conventions and meetings. It can pick up business from the new medical centre and the doctor's offices just being completed.

Downtown, however, is essentially dead. None is even sure where it is. During 20 years of development and growth from 16,000 people to 240,000, the downtown disappeared. Residents of the two areas within five blocks get in their cars and go miles to shop at suburban centres, uncomplainingly. There are no restaurants for 4,000 workers who also get in their cars to eat at roadside restaurants; or they brown bag it, inside each building, with conveniently located canteens provided. There is relatively no traffic on the streets or between different buildings.

The lovely park is never used, not by children, not by picnickers. . .It is passive

park sitting like a barrier between civic centre and downtown.

Community? For the 16,000 original residents downtown is a memory of an old, smelly cotton market. For the other residents, most of whom have never seen the historic core, downtown is a memory of a score of other places. . .

Community is the identity, the common ground, the glue.

It takes active encouragement.

For that you need to make allies of individual interests. You need garden clubs and preservations groups. You need a repertory theatre which restores an old building, acquires its subscribers by community outreach and provides community service. You need the neighbourhood association which begins to invert in small businesses and begins to think of inspiring the major employers to say downtown.

Downtown as a community centre is or should be goal one. People must be welcome in the downtown and feel part of its goals. An active involved community is an enormous powerful striking force.

Interested, excited, involved citizens invest themselves, encourage continued investment by downtown businesses which might consider fleeing, and demonstrate the sort of interest outside investors are looking for.

To develop ways in which individuals can get involved, through their personal interests to community benefit is to get all the tangential processes moving which no planners and economic development body can do alone.

9.3 Petrolia Reawakening

Ron Baker,
Petrolia

The first commercial oil well in North America was developed in Oil Springs in south-western Ontario in 1858. Soon after this a bigger well was struck nearby. A town called Petrolia grew around this oil field. At first it was a collection of wooden buildings set in a swamp with almost impassable clay roads - the whole area covered with oil derricks and holding tanks and reeking of crude oil.

The twentieth century virtually began in this small town - without oil our civilization today would be quite different. Petrolia itself grew out of the oil boom era and constructed many fine buildings. The main street with its elegant and durable Victorian fronts dates largely from 1880-1910. During the prosperous years of the nineteenth century a railway station, two mansions, an opera house and many stately homes were built. At the turn of the century the oil began to dry up, more lucrative fields were found elsewhere and the refining industries moved to Sarnia. The heart went out of Petrolia.

The next fifty years saw a gradual decline of the town. Its major industry and raison d'etres gone, a large town site peppered with abandoned wells and storage tanks, its prosperity faded. This is probably a familiar story to many people from small towns founded with much enthusiasm, energy and hope in the last century. The advent of the automobile and the mobile society further depressed the town centre as a commercial area and social life gravitated to larger, nearby cities.

Now there are signs that society is changing once again. People are becoming disenchanted with larger cities and there is a steady move back to the small towns and rural areas. In an era of rapid change and political uncertainty, people are once more looking for roots to a society that is more humane and

where the scale is still on more measurable terms.

About 8 years ago Petrolia began to grapple with its depressed downtown. We had several advantages - the streetscape was almost untouched by 'development' and was all late Victorian. In the 1920's the town had the foresight to bury all electrical services beneath the sidewalk thus removing unsightly overhead wires. Dr. Bruce Hutchinson, a member of town council, conceived the idea of a Norwich plan for the main street. All frontages were to be painted in a coordinated colour scheme. Students were employed for two years under a O.F.Y. grant, paint was supplied by the merchants and the colour scheme was supervised voluntarily by an architect. The effect was startling. For the first time in years we began to look at the architecture around us. Instead of being 'old fashioned' it became 'interesting'. Another group of citizens meanwhile had transformed the flood-plain in the centre of the town from a muddy, mosquito infested scrubland into an attractive park with a small lake. The help of the Sydenham Valley Conservation Authority was enlisted and, what had once been a liability, became an attractive addition to our town.

In 1972 town council set up a committee to consider what uses could be made of Victoria Hall, a disused opera house on the upper floor of the town hall. From this committee came Victoria Playhouse Petrolia Inc., which in the next three years raised almost half a million dollars to restore and re-equip the old opera house. This organization now runs a summer theatre, brings in plays and concerts during the winter and has just concluded a ten-day music festival in honour of the Royal Jubilee. In addition to this, amateur theatre, a children's choir and an arts group have been formed. For the first time in years there is an alternative to hockey in Petrolia!

As a result of the success of V.P.P., a Heritage Committee has been formed and

Victoria Hall and the library (which is in the old railway station) were the first buildings in Ontario to be protected under the Ontario Heritage Act. The committee is endeavoring to have a large section of downtown designated as a heritage district under this act but this is taking a lot of public education and could become a warm political issue.

Public education is the key to any downtown development and after eight years there are signs of headway in Petrolia. A business improvement area has been started and merchants are beginning to work together to promote and beautify the downtown. It is, however, sometimes difficult to wean many people from the idea that redevelopment means pulling everything down or putting up plastic fronts. The future of downtown Petrolia lies in its Victorian streetscape, in its wide sidewalks. Many of the merchants are beginning to perceive this. Still, many object to someone telling them what they can do to the front of their store although they would accept this without question if they were located in a mall with an overall decor. It obviously makes no sense for one merchant to decorate his store to enhance its historic proportions and have his neighbour put artificial stone across his frontage. Mr. Disney, to the south of us, has spent millions recreating a Victorian street in Ontario, we still try to make them

look "modern" or tear them down. There is a lesson there somewhere. The tide seems to have turned in Petrolia - town council recently forced, persuaded and otherwise cajoled a developer into moving a proposed shopping plaza from the edge of town into the middle of the downtown area where there are several buildings of little architectural significance. Taxpayer's money had to be used to sweeten the agreement, which was well worth it but took political courage. I hope they have the same hard nosed attitude when the design of the plaza in relation to the rest of the downtown is considered. Council has adopted a guide to developers to keep their buildings in the right relationship to existing buildings. This plaza will be councils first test of these new guidelines.

Petrolia is in the middle of a sewer project - the main street is in the process of being torn up, which gives us the opportunity to rethink our main street. Traditionalists are still calling for more main street parking and narrower sidewalks although all evidence points to the need for more 'people' space. I believe that the forces are at work which will enable us to make our downtown attractive and commercially viable because more and more people believe it can be done, and more and more people believe it should be done. When enough people believe - it will be done.

MAIN STREET ONTARIO



The effects of energy
on downtown cores

10

10.1 Energy Implications for Downtown

Development

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Background

Some people have suggested that the recent energy crisis is somehow a panacea for downtown, and that it will single handedly reverse the trends of the past 25 years, restoring it to the preeminence it once held. Others have suggested that the energy crisis will have little or no impact on downtowns, that their decline is irreversible and the trends against them so strong that little short of a miracle will help. To may way of thinking, the truth lies somewhere between the two. Just where it lies in that continuum between joy and despair is a function of a great many factors that I'll try to touch on briefly.

Take a hypothetical city of 100,000 people, and lets assume that it is surrounded by a suburban hinterland of roughly the same size. Further assume that this city enjoyed its greatest growth in the post world war II period, and that in recent years population growth in the central city has declined slightly, while suburban growth has continued at a rather rapid pace. In addition, major industrial concentrations are widely scattered throughout the metropolitan area, with some in and around the CBD while other were more widely distributed throughout the metropolitan area. Let's make two other sets of assumptions: first, home ownership is rather high and densities rather low, and second, car ownership is high and the public transportation system provides, at best, average service.

Does this sound familiar to you? I hope so, because it is intended to represent the "typical" urban situation that one finds throughout Canada and the U.S. Add into this situation an energy crisis that began

to assume significant importance approximately three years ago. Gasoline, the lifeblood of our cities, was in short supply. Prices soared literally overnight. Gas and electric rates more than doubled in some areas. Natural gas, which we had always thought of as limitless, suddenly was in short supply in many areas. Energy conservation became the watchword. Lines extended for blocks around gas stations. Carpools formed. For the first time in their lives, people actually planned local shopping and other trips to minimize gas usage. Thermostats went down, while frayed tempers sometimes went up. Then we were told that this situation was not a temporary aberration, but something we were going to have to live with for a long time, that is until satisfactory replacement is found for fossil fuels.

Returning to our hypothetical city of 100,000 people, a number of people began to question the impact of the energy crisis on the downtown. The optimists said it would be a boon bonanza for downtown, the pessimists said it wouldn't make any difference. In order to get at some of those energy implications for downtown, lets start by reviewing some for the recent land use factors in that city, since that in many ways forms the analytical basis for evaluating the impact of energy on downtown.

Trends in Central Business Districts

Under the auspices of IDEA, our firm has just finished a detailed study of trends in 25 American cities. This study was undertaken for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and focused on recent trends in downtowns, and the utilization of various federal, state and local programs to help counteract the problems experienced by many of them. While American cities have some very substantial differences from their Canadian counterparts, I believe that many of the most fundamental trends are similar to both. Among the most significant of our findings are the following:

1. In nearly all of the cities we studied, population of the central city had declined, often significantly since 1960.
2. In all but one of the cities we studied, retail sales had declined very substantially during the past two decades, particularly when measured in constant dollars.
3. The market for office space had increased significantly. Downtowns, at least in the sample of the cities we studied, contained anywhere from 30 to 80 per cent of the total metropolitan area white collar employment.
4. The industrial market in and around CBD's was generally declining except in those rare instances when cheap land was available. This was quite rare.
5. The residential market was relatively weak in all but the largest cities we studied.
6. We found a resurgence of interest in downtown hotel/motel development.
7. We found institutional uses (colleges, hospitals, civic centres, sport arenas, etc.) a very significant and growing factor in many of our downtowns.

These factors suggested to us several things regarding the changing function of downtown, and how that in turn may relate to the energy crisis and the future of downtowns. I believe that many of these findings may be equally applicable in Canadian cities of similar sizes.

The function of downtown is changing, often rather dramatically. In all but a handful of cities, the importance of retailing has diminished greatly. Likewise, the CBD has declined in importance as a residential

area except in those situation when there are compelling attractions which make people want to live downtown. Employment, on the other hand has increased in a great many cities, particularly white collar, government, and service employment. In all but a handful of cities, the tax base has been increasing, often at a rather dramatic pace. It is not at all unusual for the CBD of a city to account for roughly one per cent of a city's land, while it may provide anywhere from 10 to 15 per cent of the city's total tax base. Finally, we have found that there is a strong correlation between a good public transportation system and a viable downtown.

Returning to the effects of energy on downtown development, let's consider our hypothetical city of 100,000 population once again. Its retail and residential markets are weak, while its office, employment, government and institutional markets are relatively strong. What are some of the long range energy implications for this downtown?

Factors Influencing Downtown Relative To Energy

The answer to this is dependent on twelve factors which taken together suggest the energy implications for downtown development: home ownership, population density, car ownership, distribution of employment, extent of suburbanization, the availability and quality of public transportation, the critical mass of the CBD, the quality of downtown planning, commitment of the public and private sectors to the continued health of CBD, the strength of competing centres, the strength of the central city housing market, and the intrinsic economic and aesthetic attractiveness of the CBD.

1. Home Ownership

Basically, the higher the degree of home ownership, the more negative the energy implications for downtown development. Conversely, the greater

the percentage of people living in rental housing, the more positive the implications for downtown development.

2. Density

The higher the density (both existing and proposed) the more positive the implications for downtown development. Assuming the existence of a residential market, this suggests that cities may want to encourage higher residential densities, particularly in and adjacent to their CBD's. Once again the reverse is also true.

3. Car Ownership

The higher the rate of car ownership, the more negative the energy implications for long range downtown development. The lower the car ownership rate, the more positive the implications.

4. Distribution of Employment

The more concentrated the location of major employment concentration, the more favourable to the CBD, provided that these concentrations are in or adjacent to the CBD. Lets assume that our hypothetical city has such concentrations.

5. Extent of Suburbanization

The greater the percentage of metropolitan area population living within the central city, the more favourable the energy implications for downtown.

6. Availability and Quality of Public Transportation

The better the public transportation system, and the availability of large numbers of persons, the more favourable the energy implications for downtown development.

7. Critical Mass of the CBD

The larger the CBD relative to its competitive areas, and thus the greater the headstart it has over competing centres, the more favourable the long range development.

8. Quality of Downtown Planning

The better the quality of downtown planning, the more likely the CBD is able to withstand both the inroads from competing centres, and the more likely it is to take fuller advantage of the energy crisis with all that it implies.

9. Commitment of the Public and Private Sectors to Downtown

The extent to which key members of both the public and private sectors are truly committed to the success of the downtown, the more favourable the implications for the future.

10. Strength of Competing Shopping Centres

The greater the number of competing shopping centres, and the greater their competitive strength relative to downtown, the more unfavourable the implications for downtown development. Conversely, the fewer the centres in number and the weaker they are, the more favourable this is to downtown development.

11. Strength of Central City Housing Market

The stronger the central city housing market, be it rental or owner occupied, single or multi-family, the more positive the implications for downtown development.

12. Intrinsic Attractiveness for Downtown

The more attractive a downtown is both economically and physically, the more positive the implications for its continued success.

These twelve factors taken together are the key indicators of how well a central business district is likely to do in the future. In reviewing this list of factors, one critical issue stands out; namely how many of these factors can be changed or modified through some combination of public or private intervention into the workings of the market place.

Realistically, two of these factors are exogenous, in that there is little either public or private intervention can do to change them. These are home ownership and car ownership, both of which are increasing and will continue to do so.

Six of these twelve factors can be partially influenced by some combination of public and private intervention. These include: population density, distribution of employment, extent of suburbanization, critical mass of the CBD, strength of

competing shopping centres and strength of central city housing market. Judicious public intervention, combined with private support and cooperation can at least partially influence each of these factors in favour of the CBD if the consensus is that this would be a desirable course of action.

Finally, 4 of our 12 factors can be very positively influence favouring the CBD. These factors are: the availability and quality of public transportation system, the quality of downtown planning, the commitment of both the public and private sectors towards the CBD, and the intrinsic attractiveness of the downtown.

In summary, the energy implications for downtown development and the planning implications for downtown, while they are not one and the same, are inextricably related. With a real commitment on the part of both the public and private sectors and with at least some of the twelve factors working to favour the CBD, the energy implications for downtown can be highly positive in the future.



The development of open and covered
pedestrian malls and semi-malls

11

11.1 Applying the Principles of Suburban Retail Centres to Downtown Malls

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Consideration of whether malls pay must be taken in the larger context of the needs to be met and the role that malls serve. In a very real sense $E = MC^2$ except that the formula can whimsically be expressed as "Earnings equate to Motivation of Customers squared"! This formula oversimplifies the retailing task for a great deal goes into a successful pedestrian mall in downtown or in a suburban shopping centre.

Motivation of customers, as a retailer views it, can be expressed as $MC = L^3 R^2 P$.

L^3 is, of course, Location-Location-Location, a familiar theme in the retailing industry!

R^2 is the Range of Retailers, ie. the strength, variety and competitive ability of retailers combined with the breadth and depth of merchandise and services they provide and lastly the character and appeal of individual retailers that add up to a compelling attraction for customers.

P stands for Promotion and by this is meant effective promotion, tailored to the market needs and demands and carried out in an exciting and creative way but on a factual basis directed towards real value being provided to customers.

Expressed another way $L R P = \text{Long Range Plan}$ and for a mall as well as for a city such planning can be directed towards working from the inside out or from the outside in, or a well coordinated combination of the two.

In the interest of developing an effective plan and then working on it, may I refer to Charles Abrams' "The City is the Frontier". Part I deals with "Urban Problems in our Urban Age". The author draws our attention

to the declining central city as he saw it in the United States circa 1965. Today, the durable, marvellously complex and vital cities have been making some real progress in what Mr. Abrams described as objective number 5 in his blue-print for American cities "salvage the central business districts" and objective number 9 "encourage commercial clustration and reinforce existing clusters". I note the word is "clustration" not "frustration". Business, primarily retailing, is emphasized as the area meriting most attention since it is a public-oriented, difficult and complex activity even compared, for example, to development and operation of office buildings and hotels which are not by any means easy tasks in their own right.

Sound urban planning is vital to retailing success and the same holds true for suburban development. Planning, including land use and zoning, can identify the areas where retailing concentrations are to occur. Municipal policies must ensure the environment, the attitudes and the ingredients essential for retailing success are provided but even then there are no guarantees for success. Retailing has been and continues to be a changing, competitive, risk-taking business.

There needs to be effective two-way communication on a considering basis between planners and local administrations with retailing and shopping centre development industries. For example, one can see in Toronto the impact of the rapid transit and bus/street car system which knits together the entire city and has led to concentration of development at and around every subway stop. This has particularly affected the structure of retailing which has moved towards substantial concentrations in contrast to the "linear" shopping streets paralleling residential districts years ago. Retailing economics have expedited this process since considering high volume business has been necessary to survive and to make it possible to earn profits.

What are the ingredients essential for retailing success be it downtown or in

suburban shopping centres?

1. Environment

A prime requisite is that people feel safe in the area where the mall and shopping centre are located and feel that it's "Our Place" to shop, to visit, to eat, to be entertained and to participate in special events.

2. Location

The centre must be well served by highway and street network and transit systems and, in turn, serve a substantial market for there to be intense customer traffic.

3. Access and egress to the mall for both drivers and pedestrians must be easy and efficient.

4. Parking must be designed for shoppers and rapid turnover, and with rates that will be acceptable to shoppers considering that free parking is available in regional shopping centres close to where they live.

5. Two or more major department stores are needed together with other significant retail representation.

6. Strong merchant representation and a well balanced merchandising plan are needed for the mall.

7. An enclosed air-conditioned pedestrian mall linking and integrating total commercial activities (stores, office buildings, hotels, et al) is needed downtown or in the suburbs to maximize activity and sales.

8. An attractive and functional layout and design for the centre and mall are needed with creative decor treatments and customer appeal.

"Too little, too late" is the requiem for many well meant downtown projects. Minimal

architectural solutions such as potted trees and concrete benches, though such improvements may be pleasant and desirable, do not answer the problem of how retailing can survive and prosper in the downtown scene and compete effectively. (The requirements for retailing success are outlined from a department store viewpoint in schedule 1).

Let's examine downtown with regard to the need for pedestrian malls. Canada's climate is such in most cities, other than perhaps Vancouver and Victoria, that for a good part of the year a climate-controlled, enclosed mall represents a significant benefit from the users' viewpoint. Pedestrian malls have gone through a long and difficult evolution and could now be described as a concept proven in practise with many variations on the theme having been tried. Looking at downtowns, however, there are very real problems as developers in both Canada and the United States have discovered along with city administrations and senior governments. For example, downtown the property ownership is usually fragmented and with both private owners and tenants involved along with public authorities. Even within these groups opinions and interests can be very different, witness the case of a merchant occupying leased premises where there is only one year left to run, compared to another merchant who owns his premises and has three sons all interested in the business. The difficulties of land assembly on a large enough basis in the downtown scene are profound, especially when one takes into account the scale of retailing enterprise needed to be successful in competition with regional shopping centres.

Let us remember that in a number of cities the tax base for property taxation downtown has been deteriorating, reflecting in part retailers' sales trends which may have levelled off or turned down in physical volume. Despite downtown retailers taking a declining percentage of the total retail sales in a particular metro area, most assessors have been reluctant to recognize the constraints on the merchant in terms of the taxes he

can afford to pay.

Rigidities commonly exist that affect the ability of the city and its planners and developers to create pedestrian malls and shopping centres. These rigidities may relate to the many owners involved or the corporate structures of the various companies concerned or the requirements contained in financing, be it through mortgages or bonds, typically where the lender is looking for security for his loan along with the maximum yield. Physical facilities may themselves introduce rigidities into the creative development process; government policy may also create constraints as can be seen where the heritage or historical designation is applied to buildings that desirable though it may be to retain may cause real problems and costs in planning for a pedestrian mall or major redevelopment program.

Typical problems in developing downtown core pedestrian malls and shopping centres can be summed up: -

- Deteriorating downtown cores involving extensive areas.
- Fragmented property ownership.
- Rigidities in existing financing, leases.
- Diverse economic, social and political interests.
- Limited land availability and high cost.
- Old or aging buildings, heterogenous in nature and not up to current codes.
- Congested sites
- Poor access with streets at or close to capacity.
- Scarce parking
- Massive development costs
- Heavy taxation.

Combine these factors with the limited growth potential in many inner city residential and even working populations (versus continuing growth in the suburbs), the necessity for every major ingredient for retailing success to be effectively present, and the difficulties in framing and agreeing on objectives and goals sought and in meeting planning act, municipal bylaw and building code requirements

and no one can understand why so relatively few programs even reach the launching stage let alone get financed, built, leased and open successfully! Development or pedestrian malls and downtown cores is a challenging opportunity indeed and may remind one of Bunyans "Pilgrims Progress". This is especially true when existing merchants and other activities have to be kept in operation during the reconstruction program.

Following on with our mathematical opening theme, may I add a couple to your lexicon of Parkinson's or even Murphy's Laws "In corporate business or even governmental life happiness can be defined as the square of the distance, in kilometers, from head office". Further, and regarding downtown core redevelopment "the probability of it being started decreases as the square of the number of property owners and merchants involved, and of it being completed decreases as the cube of the number of planners and ratepayers involved". Consider thoughtfully the perilous position of the mayor and council usually transfixed at the intersection of the two lines just described, harpooned or lampooned by the media, and struggling with the intractable and inexorable pressures of budgets, financing and elections along with finding solutions to unemployment, crime and the lack of low cost housing - would you not agree it takes courageous, determined and public spirited citizens to tackle such responsibilities in city councils and administrations? Having seen the leaders in many cities in action I think so and respect the people who have taken on such tasks.

Let's examine together the overall economics and the total investment necessary to be effectively in the retail business on a volume basis. When Charles Dickens used the title "Great Expectations" he must certainly have been describing the demands placed upon the planners and builders of pedestrian malls and shopping centres. For example, building, fire, earthquake and other codes affecting malls and shopping centres have been steadily increasing in the costs involved over the

years. Planners' requirements have been as extensive as needs demonstrate and the fertile imaginations of all concerned can conceive. Municipal services and utility costs have been increasing at a rapid rate; all are familiar with trends in energy costs. Over and above these factors have been the customers' needs and demands and the pressures created to meet or better what competing malls may offer.

Combine these factors then with:

- high Canadian land prices
- severe construction cost escalation
- high interest rates and financing costs
- costs resulting from the lengthened time span demonstrated from the origin of a project until its completion

and we can see why a critical problem of pedestrian malls has been their economics - everyone wants the benefits but few are prepared and able to step up to the massive investment and development tasks necessary to achieve successful results.

Cloverdale Mall

Recognizing the severe costs and problems in developing a pedestrian mall and shopping centre downtown, perhaps it would be relevant to examine the shopping centre industry experience where open mall shopping centres have been modernized with mall enclosures, thereby creating pedestrian malls. A case in point is Cloverdale Mall in the west end of Toronto. The centre is just in the north-east quadrant of Highway 427 and Dundas Street and easily accessible from these main arteries.

A first generation shopping centre on 36 acres and with 317,000 sq.ft. of gross leaseable area (GLA), Cloverdale Mall was built 21 years ago and initially served as a regional for the entire western area in Toronto. As newer and larger competing centres opened that were truly regional in nature and as population growth and vehicle traffic intensified in the whole western community the trading area for Cloverdale itself shrank. Sherway 1½ miles away opened in February 1971 and with 127 stores and a total of 880,000 sq.ft., expanded

in May 1974 to 197 stores and a total 946,000 sq.ft. Mississauga Square One opened 8 miles away in October 1973 with 160 stores and 963,000 sq.ft.

Vigorous competition is the single most powerful force in retailing and the shopping centre industry both of which are, of course, competing keenly with other industries (such as travel, leisure, boating, cottaging, camping, etc. not to mention new cars and houses) for peoples' discretionary or disposable income. Competition has been increasing between centres, large and small, as well as within centres, between the major department stores themselves and also the mall merchants which in total represent a very potent sales medium equivalent in size to a large department store although with a somewhat different merchandise mix.

Let us now look at what was involved in modernizing Cloverdale Mall and enclosing the mall itself.

Cloverdale was an attractive centre from its inception. The centre was designed as a two sided mall capable of being enclosed at a later date rather than as a strip centre as was common practise at the time. Eventually, however, the centre needed mall enclosure and modernization to remain competitive.

Purchase of the centre cost, in round figures, \$8 million in 1973 including the leased Bay (originally Morgans) store. The renovations and enclosure cost \$5 million for a total of \$13 million. The number of tenants increased from 57 which included some 4 store vacancies initially, to 67 stores and steady enquiries about entry. An average sales increase of 26% is now expected for the mall merchants for 1977 compared to 1975 (the year before construction began). For mall merchants in various older centres across Canada sales increases, mainly attributable to mall enclosure and modernization, have been ranging from 15-20-25-30% compared to prior years.

A centre modernization program should have long term as well as short term objectives and benefits. It is important for older centres to be viable in the future that they be re-established with facilities that will be competitive for the next 15 or 20 years or more. Re-examination of the market served along with the merchandising plan and tenant composition for the centre to provide the basis for planning the facilities. Extensive and sometimes prolonged negotiations can be involved with mall tenants to ensure that their specific requirements are identified and met and to secure their support financially and otherwise for the mall enclosure program. The overall purpose must be to assist each mall tenant to achieve a successful store in a successful centre. Success in this context has meant both improved sales and profits. In response to the question - "Do pedestrian malls pay"? - I would say that mall enclosure and centre modernization has proven worthwhile both for owners and merchants in the shopping centre industry across Canada in the suburbs. This is relevant, I suggest, to what has been taking place, in parallel, downtown.

When one focusses on downtown the pedestrian mall question involves many more people and to answer the question - "Do malls pay"? - it is useful to look at experience thus far.

In the large metropolitan areas one can see two phenomena: -

1. Downtown shopping centres and multi use "superblock" complexes some examples being:

Scotia Square, Halifax
Place Quebec, Quebec City
Place de Ville, Ottawa
Place du Centre, Hull
Place Ville Marie and Place des Jardins, Montreal
Eaton Centre, Hudson's Bay Centre and Manulife Centre, Toronto
T/D Centre and Scotia Centre, Calgary
Edmonton Centre, Edmonton
Pacific and Vancouver Centres, Vancouver

Typically these have been developed through the initiative of one or a few major

developers with ownership or control of major property assemblies and active support from the cities concerned.

2. Pedestrian malls or links joining all the activities in a given area, some examples being: -

Montreal: the pioneer in recognizing that "channels" for pedestrian movement would represent viable retailing opportunities
Toronto: rapidly linking from Union Station through to Eaton Centre and College Park
Winnipeg: a pedestrian skywalk network will eventually link the Bay and Eaton stores and the Convention Centre
Calgary: Plus 15 concept is moving ahead with the Bay and Eatons already being linked through T/D Centre and Scotia Centre
Vancouver: Granville Mall is a grade level pedestrian mall with bus lanes. Retailing is at above and below grade and linked between the four corners of Georgia and Granville.

The "pedestrian connection" has been flexible in concept sometimes underground, sometimes at or above grade but, importantly, enclosed and climate controlled and continuous. Major activity centres have been essential as termini and the key ingredient of success has been bustling, hustling crowds or people, usually with a destination already in view, be it transportation (train or bus) or shopping or eating or accommodation (hotels) or education and entertainment (universities, convention centres and theatres) or even work! (office buildings).

In smaller cities and towns downtown redevelopment has been more rather than less difficult. One reason is that shopping centres built on the outskirts are often very close to downtown and few are beyond 1-2-3- miles of downtown and serve essentially the same trading area. This in contrast with the

large metropolitan areas where the regional shopping centres are in the 5 to 10 mile band around the city and serve different trading areas with only limited overlap with that for downtown. (This is not always the case witness Place Laurier and Ste. Foy in Quebec City which together have dominated and to a significant extent replaced the old downtown). The Ontario Government program for cities with 125,000 population and under is a positive step towards assisting downtown redevelopment to overcome the great difficulties I have described and which should not be underestimated.

Let us look at a few examples in Ontario where downtown redevelopment and pedestrian malls of one type or another are involved: -

- Peterborough Square, developed by Marathon
- Market Square in Kitchener, developed by Oxford Development
- Wellington Square in London and City Centre

Looking across Canada projects are under consideration such as Brandon, Manitoba, where the city undertook study of the city's future needs, specifically downtown, and has taken action to acquire property and negotiate agreements regarding parking and other aspects of the development.

Red Deer, Alberta, is another city where future of the downtown core and the location for retailing and shopping centres has been a vigorous issue for the last several years.

On a larger scale the Rideau Mall and Centre developments planned for Ottawa are challenging and difficult tasks directed towards revitalization of Rideau Street and development of the Federal lands. The objective is to achieve a people-oriented Rideau Business District incorporating retailing - commercial - office - hotel - convention centre and possibly some residential uses along with bus and future transit terminals. The Rideau

Mall will link and complement the approximately 750,000 sq.ft. of retail space presently existing and assist Rideau merchants to compete effectively with the large regional shopping centres now successfully operating around Ottawa. Additionally, the mall will provide an attractive meeting place convenient to Parliament and other government offices and serve a host of different needs. For example, the Rideau Mall project in Ottawa will benefit not only the residential population in the area and the working population in office buildings, but also visitors and tourists to the city and enable social, community and cultural events for which such a facility would serve good purposes. The pedestrian mall downtown not only serves many functions in its own right but also is a functional link between all the activities that surround it. Rideau Mall is a great project needed in our nation's capital and complementing the many fine office complexes already developed with major downtown retailing concentrated in the Rideau area.

The time span for development of major regional shopping centres in so-called "green fields" sites form the initial idea that the location could be a centre through property assembly, planning, financing, construction, and leasing phases, until it opens for business can extend for 8-10-12 years. Downtown redevelopments and pedestrian malls are typically more complex and difficult hence the time frame can be even longer - unpalatable though such may be to civic officials and merchants alike. Let us note that almost every one of the major projects mentioned above has, despite the best efforts of all, taken 10 years or more to bring to fruition. It takes very strong management, financial and other resources and continuity in planning and direction and key people involved to carry through programs to completion. It takes endurance, understanding and fortitude on the part of politicians, civic planners and administrators and, indeed, the voters work with those directly concerned with initiating and bringing major downtown projects to fruition over such long periods.

Consideration is necessary of what costs are involved and by whom to create a pedestrian mall; the benefits derived by the users, methods of financing the program through public and private funds or a combination of the two, and the basis on which the costs incurred will be borne.

An acid test for a pedestrian mall located where retailing concentration exists or is planned is that it must make commercial sense for the merchants associated with it and be seen by them as a paying proposition. There is a mutual interest in downtown cores and their revitalization and modernization between the merchants and property owners and the city government whose own objective may be to arrest the foreseeable downward trend in tax revenues resulting from a deteriorating city core, vacant stores, and inability of merchants to pay increased taxes.

A downtown pedestrian mall or semi mall may be in a downtown complex and under one ownership or may be achieved through street closure to vehicles or their diversion and involve many different parties. In each case one must look at the functions served and the benefits achieved relative to the investment and operating costs necessary to determine whether pedestrian malls pay or not.

Thus far we have been concentrating on pedestrian malls which must be considered in the context of planning the future of the whole downtown core area. Consultation with major developers in the United States and Canada indicates that downtown redevelopment is a costly and time consuming process where many have ventured but few developers have felt that urban redevelopment cannot be successful, but is simply to point out the substantial difficulties involved with experience in many cities highlighting that only a few where "all conditions were right" could be termed truly successful. There has to be wholehearted and continuing commitment, dedication and support financially and otherwise from the city departments and

authorities and citizens at large. The task is so massive that the developers cannot do it by themselves, nor even with half-hearted support for their endeavours. Providing, however, that the required conditions are met it is my personal belief that pedestrian malls can pay in the total sense. Pedestrian malls linking the various elements in downtown cores are clearly a major Canadian trend now and for the future. Consider that our cities would be like today without them!

In closing I would like to recognize the farsighted and positive role undertaken by the Ontario government in its consultation with the retailing and shopping centre industries regarding government policies and the initiative expressed through this symposium and similar activities.

What a Department Store Company Now Looks for in a Shopping Centre

1. Market Strategy - The Location, The Centre

- Clear, professional analysis of market and consumer needs.
- Market potential and readiness determined on a realistic basis.
- Prior consultation with department stores on locational strategy to meet their needs.
- Site well located to serve market, with good highway network, with good access, egress and traffic flow on site, with expansion capability.
- Dominant centre with strong representation by majors.
- Superb merchandising plan with well balanced mix of tenants.
- Centre image and character to be clear and distinctive.
- Parking on three sides of each department store location. Study customer flow in some typical centres.
- Plan for complementary and multi-purpose use of residual shopping centre land to strengthen centre

activity, sales and profit.

- Centre location not subject to being out flanked or intercepted.

2. The Centre's Objectives and the Corporate Structure

- Define objectives and policies to achieve them.
- Identify where partners interests coincide or diverge and how to cope with them.
- Determine equity partners you should or must have
 - to ensure centre goes ahead
 - to achieve successful operation.
- Prepare responsible, conservative pro forma centre sales-leasing-financial plans; program costs (for hard and soft costs). Forecast for entire long term financing period not just "first full year". Recognize realistic front end investment and carrying costs. . . even if centre delayed in opening.
- Decide whether equity partners are
 - 1) Entrepreneurs
 - 2) active participants
 - 3) "passive" financial investor.

3. The Developer

- Integrity vital "promise only what you can deliver, deliver what you promise."
- Knowledge and experience.
- Leadership and determination.
- Strong team covering major functional areas competently.
- Financial resources to carry project to completion.
- Good local relationships and associations.

4. The Department Store Deal

- Put yourself in the department store's shoes in considering their requirements, and vice versa.
- Negotiate and agree on basic deal including all "business" aspects and key legal terms or clauses.

- Recognize different priorities and timing the department stores will assign to a centre.
- Long lead time is usually necessary within a large company be it department store or developer.
- Equip the department store with the facts. . . Sins of omission can be damaging to your proposal being seriously considered.
- Design each deal to meet specific department store needs and policies.
- Plan flexibility in all centre planning and financing to meet future expansion, modernization and retailing change.
- Remember the department store
 - wants a successful store in a successful centre.
 - wants everything possible going for it. . . because it has a big investment to make in preference to other centres it could have gone into!
 - has a lot of outside pressures on it in addition to those the developer has to face
 - needs high volume sales through-put all year
 - has a contribution to make in planning the centre
 - makes it possible for the centre to go ahead
 - may want you to develop another centre somewhere else where you'd like to be.
 - Your and the department store interests are mutual - or should be on the majority of the centre decisions and promotions.

5. Shopping Centre Management and Promotion

- Continuity of centre ownership and management are vital.
- Continuing consultation with store manager is essential - in advance of significant centre decisions or actions.
- Agreement on common area standards and costs is necessary on a well

balanced and coordinated basis directed towards centre and department store objectives

- standards of maintenance, housekeeping ,etc. to best industry practises and to meet local conditions,
 - cost management and control requires creative efforts and dedication plus constant vigilance.
 - annual operating and capital budgets are approved by the department store company
 - reporting, audit and review are essential.
- Effective centre promotion, media coverage, community and special events all with consultation in advance and good coordination are vital to centre success and maximizing the trading area served by the centre.

11.2 The Hamilton Mall in

Allentown, Pennsylvania:

Lessons to be Learned

William Sharf,
Progress Associates Inc.,
Allentown, Pennsylvania

During 14 years of work in public administration, my most rewarding and depressing experiences relate directly to the Hamilton Mall. As both Director of Community Development and Executive Director of the Allentown Redevelopment Authority, I had the opportunity to coordinate the Hamilton Mall program from its inception through to the ribbon cutting. There are, in my view, a number of lessons to be learned from that experience.

Location

The Hamilton Mall is located in Allentown, Pennsylvania - a southeastern community in the Keystone State - which has a population of 108,000. The city is part of the Lehigh

Valley metropolitan area with a population of approximately 550,000 people. It is located 100 miles due west of New York City and 60 miles directly north of Philadelphia.

The Mall was officially dedicated and opened in November, 1973. Four years later, it is fair to state that part of the objectives of halting the severest part of physical decline in the city centre and improving the shopper climate as well as establishing needed underground utilities were accomplished. However, a change in city administration in 1974 momentum slowed. The office developments creating a captive market of workers and support commercial facilities has not materialized. The Mall, in my view, has also been poorly maintained and as those of you in the audience know from private and public experience, deferred maintenance is false economy.

Why a Hamilton Mall?

The reasons for undertaking this centre city improvement are not too unusual when compared to other communities in the United States:

With a static population and the threat of a declining tax base, the hope was that a major mall project would aid existing strengths and add new facilities to the city's tax base.

The strategy was to avoid waging a life and death war with any planned or existing suburban shopping centres, but rather to assure the city that it would get its fair share of any expanding regional economic growth.

The project was the keystone of a total revitalization program which included housing rehabilitation, park and recreation development, transportation improvements, and a number of related projects in surrounding neighbourhoods. The

Mall was a logical base on which to build and at the same time, protect those investments which had been made in the 1950's and 1960's through federal, state and foundation grants.

Another reason for undertaking the Mall was the deterioration and image problem that deterioration created. The downtown area looked poor and did not provide a solid image for a community that prided itself on its fiscal conservancy and more than 200 years of paced growth.

Facts and Figures

Sponsorship

The Hamilton Mall was a project of the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown with the financial support and backing of the City of Allentown and the State of Pennsylvania.

Financing

An original planning study of centre city was conducted for a total sum of \$60,000. One-half of this was paid by the State of Pennsylvania as a grant to the Redevelopment Authority and the remainder was equally split between the city and downtown business.

The total project cost was \$5 million. Half was a direct State of Pennsylvania grant as a demonstration project, and half was a matching cash commitment by the city financed through part of a major General Obligation Bond issue. (It is interesting to note the bi-partisan backing for the project since the original planning funds were secured by a Democratic city administration from a Republican state administration and the major \$5 million total funding

secured during a Republican city and Democratic state administration).

Design

The Mall is a semi-mall design stretching 2,500 feet.

Along both the north and south sides, a 13' steel and plexi-glass canopy provides a measure of weather protection and also the structure for a variety of graphic and communication systems.

There are more than 80,000 sq.ft. of brick tile paving, 3,300 cubic yards of concrete, 240 bollards partially delineating the area of the transit-way and pedestrian areas, 8 kiosks, and more than 20 different varieties of plants and trees.

Market Information

There is a working population exceeding 14,000 people within four blocks of the Mall; it is estimated that from 1972 to 1975 sales increased 15% while employment increased by 20%. Real estate values, however, increased only 2%. There is an absence of accurate detailed market data to make meaningful comparisons.

Observations and Lessons

Does the development of open and covered pedestrian mall and semi-mall pay? The answer, as far as Allentown's Hamilton Mall is concerned a qualified yes.

If the Mall had not been built, centre-city Allentown would now be in an advancing state of physical and economic decline. The Mall has at least helped stabilize the centre city, although important new office and commercial development has not

continued to occur.

The Allentown experience could have been more successful had a private sector group been formed in the early stages with more active involvement of industrial, banking, and other members of the power structure rather than simple reliance on merchants. In many cases, the merchant community is the weakest segment of a community coalition for downtown improvement. Financing, real estate, and other institutional representatives are often the strongest members of a coalition.

The importance of improving surrounding commercial, residential, and industrial neighbourhoods cannot be overstated. Part of Allentown's difficulty has been that too few people leading to the Hamilton Mall effort understood the overall strategy of a total approach to centre city improvement, where the Mall was certainly the keystone but, still, only part of an overall improvement plan.

It is important to involve the residents and representatives of community institutions, and neighbourhood groups.

The financial capacity of the community should also be studied carefully in the earliest planning phases concerning a mall or semi-mall. Can the community afford the cost of the maintenance? What formula are there for financing and maintaining the improvements? What are the implications of police, maintenance, insurance, and other associated costs?

Another important lesson to be learned is the need for a broad based organization of public and private interests supporting centre city improvements such as malls in order to avoid a loss

of momentum which can occur during a change in political administrations.

Conclusion

In retrospect, the Hamilton Mall project was a proper undertaking for the community. It is not too late to improve maintenance of the facility, create more of a private/public coalition supporting the downtown, and to market the community in an aggressive, imaginative way in order to create new needed development. Some encouraging signs in the community include a recent change in Lehigh County through which the County should be able to commit considerable resources to the improvement of downtown Allentown. There is growing interest and commitment by business and industry in the Allentown area to programs like the Mall involving both the public and private sectors in an effort to improve the quality of life.

11.3 Thunder Bay: The Southcore Revitalization Project

Claude Smith,
V.B. Cook Ltd.,
Thunder Bay

The City of Thunder Bay resulted from the amalgamation of portions of two outlying municipalities and the former cities of Port Arthur and Fort William. The amalgamation took place on January 1, 1970. The business and downtown shopping areas of Port Arthur and Fort William are approximately five miles apart, and are two distinct physical entities.

Approximately three years ago there was a significant urban renewal scheme in the downtown of what was Port Arthur. The result, in part is a complex consisting of a department store, a supermarket and some 20 other shops, banks, etc., and a parking structure. This is all under one roof and occupies more than one city block. This complex is called "Keskus", Finnish for

meeting place. During the past 10 years several shopping plazas have been built, for the most part on the periphery of the residential areas. These plazas are similar to those in most cities with one or two major retailers as an anchor and several smaller establishments all located under one roof and surrounded by paved parking areas.

This trend of plazas on the periphery and Keskus in what was Port Arthur siphoned off the trade in the business and shopping area of downtown Fort William. Couple with the lethargy resulting from poor business and a deterioration trend set in.

With this situation facing the city, the planning office under the guidance and direct involvement of David Thompson, the Director of Planning, began to develop a scheme for the main shopping area of the former City of Fort William. After two years of intensive work, an application for funding assistance was forwarded to the provincial government. This application was received favourably and the city was ready to move with a South Core Revitalization Scheme.

A Redevelopment Authority was established as a committee responsible to city council and comprised of three councillors, and two representatives from the business community. Mr. Thompson, and Mr. McCormack, the Urban Redevelopment Officer, were to be resource people. One of the first acts of the Redevelopment Authority was to engage Gordon A. Cuthbertson Limited, a local mechanical engineering consultant, and V.B. Cook Co. Ltd.

Mr. Cuthbertson's roles is to liaise with the businesses that would be affected directly to ensure that they were aware of the program and all of its ramifications, and to ensure tha the servicing and fire protection were adequate for each establishment. V.B. Cook Co. Limited's role is to project management for the entire scheme -

in essence to translate the philosophy of revitalization into a tangible and workable reality.

In order to reach this goal, a great many concerns had to be laid to rest. Some of these concerns revolved around the physical aspects of the project; others were concerned with the operational or administrative aspects.

With respect to the former, we had to ascertain the physical conditions of the services such as water and sewer lines since, despite the fact that they may have been adequate in size, age might warrant replacing them because they would be virtually inaccessible once the project was completed. We also had to ascertain the adequacy of telephone, hydro and gas supplies to the area. In a nutshell, it was decided that all of the major services in the core area were to be replaced and, in essence, the core area should become self-sufficient from a servicing standpoint.

As you can appreciate, the Ontario Building Code has a significant impact on a project of this nature primarily in the area of fire protection and fire fighting equipment. Mr. Cuthbertson dealt with the Ontario Building Code people and with the Thunder Bay Fire Department and a successful resolution of this particular aspect was negotiated.

One might expect that there would be a significant problem to solve with respect to traffic and its change in flow. However, a traffic study indicated that, in our particular instance, although there would be a significant change in traffic patterns, the end result would, in fact, be better than it was prior to the project.

Concerns from the administrative or operational standpoint were largely related to the occupants of the stores and businesses which are actually within the mall. For instance, there are several banks which

require unique security arrangements particularly when there are deliveries of cash either to or from the bank. As a spin-off from the security problem, I am sure you can appreciate that parking for bank customers, particularly those that are of an industrial or a business nature, is essential. The parking must be relatively close and with a short clear route to the bank.

One other problem that has to be solved is that of insurance both during construction and subsequent to the completion of the mall. Heavy construction equipment can cause severe damage to existing buildings. The owner and the city must be adequately protected. In that same vein, there are problems that arise during construction and maintaining of protection for the general public.

The most important problem that had to be solved, and probably the most difficult, was the concept of "business as usual" during the entire construction program. A store owner cannot tolerate any interruption to his business despite the fact that the road might be torn up in front of his store for the installation of a sewer or water line. Nor can he tolerate the interruption of any of his services such as hydro, telephone or water supply. These particular problems put a severe strain on everyone involved.

Construction of the project will begin in 1978.

11.4 Spark Street Mall: The Ottawa Experience

Lorne Smith,
Pedestrian Promenade Authority,
Ottawa

The Design Committee for the Sparks Street Mall was the Pedestrian Promenade Authority for the City of Ottawa, together with the architect, the late Watson Balharrie.

The spread of urban populations into the suburbs, which began shortly after World War II, was largely responsible for the ubiquitous shopping centres constructed to serve them. This new trend started the drain of commercial vitality felt by the central business district all over North America. Sparks Street - in the heart of Canada's National Capital - was no exception.

In 1959, the Ottawa Board of Trade filled a chartered plane with downtown businessmen, civil and federal government officials, and flew to Toledo, Ohio to view what many had never seen before - a "summer mall" which was a pedestrian precinct in the heart of "downtown". On their return to Ottawa some of them were enthusiastic about the potential contained in the principle involved, and formed the nucleus of the Sparks Street Development Association, which had, as one of its main objectives, the desire to test and create a pedestrian mall on three blocks of Sparks Street.

Several segments of Ottawa citizens were, naturally, very much concerned about the future prospects of such a venture. People in general, who would use and enjoy the Mall, together with tenants in the buildings facing the Mall, adopted an interested, but "show me" attitude. The Federal National Capital Commission was excited about its potential and was a valued "silent partner". The only signs of apathy came from some abutting property owners and city hall. However, in the Spring of 1960, the city council agreed to share the cost of a "temporary" mall up to a maximum of \$15,000, with the Sparks Street Development Association (S.S.D.A.) paying the remainder.

Anticipating official approval, a design committee held meetings to solve many of the problems related to parking, delivery of merchandise, changed traffic patterns, etc.

Such a complex undertaking naturally cuts across many different interests, and even

personalities. Detractors were quoted in the press saying a Mall would turn Sparks Street into a "carnival", that it would attract "loafers", that it would eliminate the "carriage trade", and so on. Some merchants refused to join the Association or contribute to the cost of a Mall. Delay until all facets were "right" would mean inaction, so we inaugurated a temporary mall in the summer of 1960. It was a great success. Further summer malls continued successfully until 1965. We then tried a winter mall, which also proved both interesting and successful, and the street was kept clear of snow without too much difficulty in spite of a snowfall exceeding 100 inches.

In 1963 a citizens committee held meetings with the public and reported a very favourable reaction to the idea of a mall. Some assessments had been lowered by the Court of Revisions for Sparks Street store owners and, as these three blocks produced the highest tax revenue of any three blocks in Ottawa, any project designed to restore and improve real estate values was of great interest to city hall - so provision for a permanent year-round pedestrian mall was included in the 1966 budget.

The city applied to the provincial legislature for enabling bylaws in 1965, and they were approved. The City of Ottawa Act 1965 permitted the city to pass bylaws establishing all or any part of any street as a pedestrian promenade on a petition of, or with the consent of, a majority of the owners representing at least one-half of the value of the lots to be assessed, and subject to the approval of the Ontario Municipal Board. The cost would be apportioned between the city and the owners of property abutting the pedestrian promenade, as the city council may prescribe.

The city also may pass bylaws to establish a Pedestrian Authority, to be appointed and to operate under certain guidelines. The

first bylaw passed (206-65), was for the establishment of Sparks Street as a Pedestrian Promenade. It outlined such things as the limits of the Promenade; the exclusion of vehicles, and those emergency vehicles which could enter; hours when service vehicles could be on the Mall; the fact that no person shall make use of any part of the Mall for business purposes without obtaining a Permit from the Pedestrian Promenade Authority of the City of Ottawa; and that the Authority shall be responsible for approving all plans and designs for the Mall.

A second bylaw (207-65) established a Pedestrian Promenade Authority which was entrusted with the construction, maintenance, control, operation, and management of Pedestrian Promenades in the City of Ottawa. It further states that all powers, rights, obligations, authorities, and privileges conferred in, and duties imposed on, the Corporation of the City of Ottawa by any general or special acts, with respect to the construction, maintenance, operation, and management of pedestrian malls, shall be exercised by the Authority.

The five members were to be appointed from qualified citizens by the city council for three-year terms of office. This Authority will prepare necessary expense estimates and budgets for council approval, and is subject to audit by the city auditors.

In June 1966 "consents" had been signed for over 90% of the assessment involved, and the Ontario Municipal Board approval for a permanent Sparks Street Mall was given on June 15th, 1966.

To minimize the dislocation of this major business district, it was planned to complete the project in two stages. Excavation and construction of a new storm sewer began immediately after Labour Day in 1966, and was finished in November after which the street was made as attractive as possible for the winter months. On

March 27, 1967 the contractor initiated work to rehabilitate the surface and construct the above-street furnishings - complicated to some extent by the fact that new Hydro, Bell, and Ottawa Gas utility services were buried concurrently.

It is interesting to note that all this construction in the Fall of 1966, and the Spring and Summer of 1967, did not deter normal pedestrian traffic on these three blocks. They came in large numbers to see how "their" Mall was progressing. No stores were closed, and merchants were surprised and pleased at this unexpected response from the general public.

Mayor Don Reid officially opened the permanent Sparks Street Mall on June 28, 1967, just 48 hours prior to Canada's 100th birthday. Since that time the Mall has achieved a popularity far exceeding the dreams of the most enthusiastic supporters.

There is so much to say about the Mall that possibly the best way to cover it would be through a series of miscellaneous notes.

The Mall Authority, supplemented by the advice of experts, was fully responsible for design, and this helped make the Mall a "Peoples Mall".

The idea of canopies was discarded early, because sunshine was to be an important part of any Mall design - also there would be problems of cost and snow removal - unhappiness of second floor tenants, etc. In addition, we did not want to funnel pedestrian traffic, but to have it flow everywhere on the Mall.

The city paid one-third of all special Mall construction costs, and the property owners fronting the Mall two-thirds. Also, the city paid an amount equal to that for normal local improvements of sidewalks, street surfaces, and for storm sewers.

An 18' traffic lane had to be "hidden"

in the final design as an emergency fire route.

All permanent planters, fountains, etc., were designed so that pedestrians could sit on them, and with crowds of thousands, this was an important decision. Also, all benches were designed with backs for added comfort.

Trees are planted in the ground, not in pots, and there are about 150 trees - 10 or 12 types - in the four blocks of the current Mall.

Each year we plant about 20,000 flowers of many varieties, starting in the Spring with tulips, daffodils and hyacinths.

The 5th Block of the Sparks Street Mall, between Bank and Kent, is under construction and will be completed in December of this year.

Under one double shelter in each block, a "service module" was placed. It includes a drinking fountain, stamp vending machine, pay telephone, and a directory board.

Concealed speakers produce suitable background music in specific areas in each block.

Before completing the Mall, an attempt was made to coordinate building facade restoration, and the pleasing results were an added plus for the Mall.

All overhanging signs, and most permanent canopies, were eliminated.

Carrying out a high standard of maintenance is a constant concern of the Authority. This includes cleaning and upkeep of all above-street furnishings, benches, fountains, lamps, etc., as well as the planting, cultivating, and watering of flowers.

annual costs to the property owners have been kept between \$5.00 and \$9.00 per foot

frontage by the Authority, who manage the Mall on a free and voluntary basis, with only one employee who works full-time for about eight months, and part-time thereafter. The total annual budget is about \$43,000.

The city cleans the street surfaces, including snow removal, and gives excellent and priority service to the Mall.

In the 11 years since the Mall became permanent, the Authority has received tremendous backing and help from the city which has never interfered with, or overruled, an Authority decision.

The property owners have never once complained to the Authority.

The S.S.D.A. concerns itself with advertising and promoting the Mall and Christmas Tree lighting. It has a friendly working arrangement with the Authority.

Permits are granted, free, for events and happenings on the Mall, with the stipulation that soliciting money, and distributing, on the Mall are not allowed. Everything takes place on the Mall - concerts - fashion shows - speeches - dancing - displays - T.V. and Radio Shows - parades for Santa Claus, Grey Cup, etc. Permits for selling include basically Mall-oriented sales, i.e., restaurants, fruit, flowers, and ice cream.

The Authority considers control to be the most important ingredient in successfully operating a mall, and every decision is made in the interests of the pedestrians, for it is their mall. No exceptions are made, even for the S.S.D.A., government, or city officials.

We are proud of the fact that through delegations, correspondence, and personal visits, we have helped people - from Europe, the Near East, Australia and New Zealand, and a great many areas in the United States and Canada.

In 1971, the Sparks Street Mall was awarded one of the first Vincent Massey Awards for Excellence in the Urban Environment, involving pedestrian places in the cities of Canada. The citation states that "it was the classic example, and that, as a tremendously successful community enterprise it had brought a new vitality and urbanity to the centre of the nation's capital". It also stated that "the conversion of Sparks Street, a typical downtown commercial street to a Mall has made it much more than just a place of shops and offices. The Mall has become a real social centre of urban life where people come partly for business reasons, and partly to enjoy the experience of seeing the place, and the people, without the pressure of traffic and time. The design of the Mall with its trees, flowers, fountains, benches and colour have helped to give it this atmosphere of leisure".

A very extensive study made in 1975 and 1976 at the Stanford Research Institute, as a pedestrian facility benefit study for the U.S. National Research Council, stated - "The Sparks Street Mall, completed in 1967 after a series of temporary malls beginning in 1960, is probably the most successful pedestrian Mall in North America".

Awards and comments from all sources are deeply appreciated, but our greatest thrill comes each time we hear Ottawa pedestrians talk with pride about "our Mall".

Finally - does a Pedestrian Mall pay?

Merchants on the Sparks Street Mall consider this location as good as, or better than, any suburban shopping centre. One of the original dissenting merchants has since publicly stated it was the best location in Ottawa. No stores have remained empty on the Mall since it was built.

Property values are probably the highest in Ottawa, and one large owner went on record as stating that they had property

throughout Canada, but the property on the mall was the most valuable.

The city gets additional tax revenue from the mall - a street where owners were asking for downward assessments in taxes before the permanent Mall was built.

It is one of the top tourist attractions in Ottawa, thus bringing in additional business revenue.

Finally, and most important, it is a happy

restful place for pedestrians who appreciate the concern shown for them by their community.

It has been an extraordinary place for attracting and mixing the whole kaleidoscope of society, rich and poor, young and old, hip and square.

The Sparks Street Mall has paid handsomely - not only in a tangible monetary way, but also in an intangible improvement in our way of life.



Managing a downtown in transition **12**

12.1 Regional Cooperation

H. Bodmer,
Regional Resources Project,
Alberta

Regional Resources Project No. 1 is an exercise in cooperative self-help in Alberta. The project consists of ten communities that:

- 1) are deeply concerned about their future;
- 2) recognize the limitations placed on them by their size when compared to larger metropolitan centres of Calgary and Edmonton;
- 3) are willing to take the initiative to attempt to affect and control their own destiny.

However, this desire did not spark spontaneously. It was kindled during many months of work with this same group under the aegis of the Task Force on Urbanization and the Future.

Evolution of the Project

The Task Force on Urbanization and the Future was established by the Government of Alberta in 1971 to examine aspects of urbanization which were of concern to the people of Alberta. Six task committees were formed, each being responsible for the investigation of a particular problem, including regional planning effectiveness, and the potential of smaller communities in regions of both slow and rapid growth.

An example of an area that was examined is the Drumheller Region where rural decline was the problem. For the purposes of investigation, the Drumheller Region was defined as an area lying within a fifty-mile radius of Drumheller and including the communities of Acme, Trochu, Three Hills, Carbon, Rockyford, Standard, Hussar, Bassano, East Coulee, Wayne, Rosedale, Drumheller, Delia, Morrin, Hanna and portions of the Municipal Districts of Kneehill and Starland, the County of Wheatland and

Improvement District No. 7.

The investigation process was based on the premise of interest-based planning, and involved people and agencies who had a stake in the vitality of the region. The process began with a series of public meetings in each community in the region. Two representatives were selected to represent their communities on the Regional Task Committee which was composed of both local representatives and technical advisors. This group therefore contained representation from the traditional decision makers (ie. civil service, planners, educators, etc.) as well as local citizens. However, the "technocrats" served only as advisors, and an attempt was made to have those directly affected by the decisions make them.

The process was a labourious one, but necessary. Dozens of meetings were held, and often because of the nature of the discussions (being so emotionally charged) it took a great deal of time before the decision-making process could begin. In January of 1972, just four months after the commencement of the Task Committee process, the government reduced this aspect of the Task Force's activities from the originally scheduled three-year period to 10 months. In order to reach at least a part of the original objectives, the process was greatly accelerated. In June 1972, the Task Committee completed its work and had its report published shortly thereafter.

The Committee expressed concern about the "decreasing number of life-style options available to Albertans", and commented that "one of the consequences of rural decline has been that rural people, largely through no fault of their own, find themselves in difficult economic circumstances". The report stated that "this committee does not concur with the concept of natural inevitable decline, but sees it rather as the product of multiple, though uncoordinated, decision-making processes

wherein those involved in decision-making have failed to perceive all the ramifications inherent in their decisions. In view of this, the same decision-making, whether in government or in industry, must be encouraged to restore some balance in the distribution of the Province's economic growth."

The report contained several recommendations which the Committee thought would help eliminate some of the disadvantages associated with rural life, one of the most urgent needs being the need for a resident professional who could offer guidance and assistance to local people regarding senior government programs and policies. For these services to be provided to smaller centres, it would have to be on a cooperative or regional basis.

Having obtained the commitment and financial support of ten communities in the Drumheller Region to continue efforts to implement the recommendations, a proposal was submitted for a "Regional Resources Project" to the provincial government. This proposal was accepted on a one-year experimental basis on September 1st, 1972. The project has since been extended twice to March of 1975, and has now been given an additional three-year commitment by both the participating communities and the provincial government.

The Theory of Cooperation

Regional Resources Project No. 1 is a grouping of communities within a region who are bound together as opposed to each acting individually.

They also realized that individually they could not afford the services of a professional community developer. However as a group, with a shared cost arrangement with the province, the concept would be feasible. The project was therefore initiated with the intent to fill the gaps in the area of community development processes and with the

aim to provide the following services:

- a) resident professional assistance and expertise in coordinating government services at the local level;
- b) information dissemination (as a result of the task force experience, the communities realized that they had been missing out on a number of senior government programs mainly because they did not know how to apply for them);
- c) community inventories - catalogue of assets and liabilities; and
- d) initiate the establishment of local development companies.

The Strategies Developed

The Project Board

Regional Resources Project No. 1 is administered by a Project Board consisting of one council member from each participating community. The project is funded jointly on a 90% to 10% ratio between the province and the participating communities. The services of the project coordinator are contracted by the board and therefore the coordinator is not a civil servant, but instead is responsible directly to the board.

The Project Board guides the project coordinator. At its monthly meetings which are rotated among the participating communities, the board considers problems both of a local and a regional nature.

Professional Assistance and Information Dissemination

The project coordinator regularly visits each community to provide information, interpretive assistance, and direction to residents of those communities. By improving the general level of understanding of government programs and policy, local people

are in a better position to take the appropriate action to resolve their problems.

These visits also enable the project coordinator to monitor the progress of local projects which are of particular significance when one considers that the project has assisted in bringing more than \$2.5 million in external funding to the region.

Community Inventories

These were prepared during the project's first year of operation as a part of a Business Development course presented with the assistance and co-operation of the Provincial Industrial Development Branch. The inventory consists of a general review of what is available locally and what is not. Once these assets and liabilities have been ascertained, the community is in a better position to develop the appropriate strategies to enhance or alleviate the situation, whatever the case may be. The final stage of this exercise was to assemble all this information into a usable document which would then be used to assist a community to attract new residents, business, and industry.

Local Development Cooperatives (LDCs)

A local development co-op is an association of people in a particular district who are interested in the continuing development of the area. The purpose of the LDC is to promote, encourage, and assist the residential, commercial, and industrial development of the community and surrounding district. The LDC is a legal entity set up under the terms of the Provincial Cooperatives Act, with a board of directors and a share structure which enables the community to invest in its own future.

The equity raised through the sale of shares can be utilized in a number of ways. Firstly, to provide residential housing on a speculative basis, wherein the LDC assumes the role of a general contractor

and developer. Secondly, to provide commercial and industrial facilities on a lease to own or outright purchase agreement. In the former, the LDC uses programs from the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation (AHMC); in the latter case the Alberta Opportunity Company (AOC) is utilized. The rationale behind the LDC concept in terms of the shareholder is that the individual's return on his shares will not come in the form of dividend expectations, but rather by way of increased services and general economic activity.

The Practice of Cooperation

There are different levels of cooperation that exist within the day-to-day operations of the project. Examples of this can be seen in the functioning of the Project Board, prospecting for economic development, community interactions, and varied usages of senior government programs.

The Regional Resources Project Board provides an administrative function but perhaps more importantly it provides the structure for a unified regional approach to problem solving. For example, through the monthly meeting, Board members have the opportunity to share both the successes and problems related to municipal administration, provision of services, and planning and completion of various capital projects thus forming a collective learning experience.

Similarly, joint meetings between the executive of the LDCs and Project Board members are held. This has proved to be a very positive method for dealing with the delivery of senior government programs through agencies such as AHMC and AOC. It also enables everyone to become fully informed about the programs and the various methods of applying them to varying local situations. It was through this approach that the speculative home loans were arranged by the local development companies.

The advantages of this regional cooperation can be seen in terms of a "power bloc" concept. In 1973, the Project Board submitted a number of resolutions to the annual Alberta Urban Municipalities Association convention. These resolutions concerned problems of a municipal nature that were confronting all the project communities and because the resolutions had the full support of all the project communities, they carried more weight at the convention.

Regional cooperation has proved advantageous for both government and the communities in that government agencies are able to meet with and provide services to 10 communities at once rather than with each council separately. This is of particular importance for the preparation of studies such as Alberta Housing Corporation's need and demand surveys for housing and residential land development. Similarly, the Department of Environment prepared a Water Reserves and Surface Drainage Study for the project which was most beneficial because most of the communities' water supply is dependent upon groundwater sources. In these situations savings were realized by government while at the same time the communities obtained the required information they may not have been able to get as readily acting as individual communities.

The benefits of cooperation are also realized through a regional approach in prospecting for economic development, the rationale being that it does not matter where development takes place so long as it occurs somewhere within the region. In the past, these communities were in constant competition for private and public investment and development. The communities now realize that they will all benefit from spin-off activities and further that they will all eventually get their turn. As a result the competitive conflict has been somewhat diminished.

The project coordinator's role in this

case is to make the prospective client aware of the attributes of each community and sell him on the benefits of locating in the project area. It is then up to the client to make the appropriate location decision. Further, the project coordinator assists the client by way of providing contacts with various government agencies and loaning programs. The project coordinator's role is to promote the region as an attractive area for growth and development.

Cooperation also takes the form of sharing facilities and services where the demand does not justify duplication within the region.

The Future of Cooperation in Regional Resources Project #1

Regional Resources Project #1 was created to deal, in part, with problems of decline, but that situation has now been somewhat reversed, so that the communities must now deal with growth, an entirely different proposition. The communities must now make some important decisions regarding community size, growth rate, and how each relates to some notion of quality of life. Obviously this is a local matter, but the provision of outside technical consultation could be obtained on a regional basis. Once again, this type of planning process would require senior government assistance.

Municipal administration has become increasingly more complex, will probably continue to do so, and nowhere is this felt more severely than in the small community where one or two persons must perform all municipal duties. Therefore, the local administrators will be required to become even more knowledgeable and more proficient in their duties. To meet this need, the project is endeavouring to organize a workshop on a seminar format with Mount Royal College in Calgary, with the scope and content of its program to be determined by the local administrators themselves.

The key to successes will once again depend on the continuing cooperation among the project communities.

If these communities should wish to continue to grow and provide increased locally delivered goods and services, then more serious attention will have to be given to the supply of commercial and industrial facilities. At one time there were a number of vacant buildings in each of the communities. With the recent growth trends, this is no longer the case. To date, private developers and entrepreneurs have not come forward to provide the needed new facilities. It would seem that local development companies could take a leadership role in providing speculative commercial and industrial space which would be either rented or provided on a lease-to-own basis. The communities have found that in order to attract investment, the facility must be available, or the LDC must be capable of moving quickly to meet the need as it arises, otherwise the investor look elsewhere.

The communities must also make a concerted effort to provide commercial and industrial land. At the moment most of the communities have either expanded to their corporate limits, or their existing commercial and industrial lands are filled. This shortage of commercial land is critical, and negotiations must proceed with senior governments to institute land banking and development programs which will not create an inordinate financial burden on the smaller rural communities.

12.2 The Developer and the Municipality: Need for a Mutual Understanding

B. Onyschuk,
Perry, Farley & Onyschuk,
Toronto

The developer sees himself as the last of the free enterprisers, quickly becoming an

endangered species in today's complex society (with some circles of society, notably some city councils, preaching active extinction of his breed!).

He is, however, a businessman out to do a job. A responsible developer is in it for the profit, but not for an inordinate profit. Too often you hear councillors (and sometimes ratepayer groups) accusing him of being a profiteer. He doesn't particularly like to hear that. Quite frankly, any developer prepared to take on a downtown redevelopment, I can assure you, is not going to be a profiteer. He is prepared to tough bargaining sessions, and if you think he is exacting too good a bargain, you just talk price and terms with him, and don't resort to a battle of words.

The general rule is that the developer will be looking for a minimal return on his investment which is 1% over the prevalent first mortgage rate. In today's market it may be 12½% as a minimum, and possibly going up to 14 and 15%. Developers work on a cash flow method in doing feasibility projections because lenders won't provide the money on any other basis.

In a sense the developer is the middle-man. The financial institutions know his past track record, to make sure that the loan can be paid when required. The attitude of the financial institutions is that they are "not in the business of foreclosure". Thus financial institutions are going to require a good cushion against the various risks. The minimum cushion is his minimum rate of return on the cash flow method basis.

When you are checking out various developers for your downtown projects, find out what their track record and what their reputation is with investment houses and mortgage lenders. It will serve no one any good to give the redevelopment project to someone after many studies and various selection processes, and then find out the institutions lend.

A responsible developer will look at design, and incorporate it in his project (as much as possible), but he will always have his eye on the bottom of the balance sheet.

Thirdly, the developer will want to know what the parameters are, and then to be left alone to do the job.

Finally, you should recognize that the developer would much rather be developing in the suburbs, or in any event out of the central spotlight of the city. In the suburbs there is trouble enough, with ratepayers, neighbours and red tape. But the core project makes it extra difficult because building conditions are tight, lot sizes are irregular, adjoining buildings and streets will hamper the project during construction. Relocations will be a problem. The dust and din of construction must be controlled with possible claims by neighbours. The street systems will have old sewers, easements, gas mains and other inadequate utilities. The entire project will be very tricky economically. It is the highest priced land, it will be a high cost project anyway; parking structures (probably required) are costly, building construction costs will be high. Many projects can go down without a trace if everything isn't just right.

There are those who promise the moon and those who will tell you how successful they have been in some other cities (always check them out). And there are those who will tell you that your plan is unworkable and impossible. Somewhere between the two poles (probably closer to the latter than to the former) will be the person that you want.

Finding the right developer is difficult. Here are some suggestions:

1. always get a full biography on the proposed developer and check it out;

2. check financial stability through contacts with lending institutions.

Get yourself an experienced negotiator to act on your behalf right from the start; someone who knows what the developer can afford to pay, knows the basic costs prices for constructions, knows the basic rules of financing, and probably knows the developer.

Don't get a committee of council involved in the negotiations. It is much too political a group. Council should be one step removed from the bargaining table, and should reserve unto itself the approval of the final terms that are worked out by your negotiator with the prospective developer.

Why do I make these two recommendations?

Perhaps it is obvious to some of you, but let me restate the point to emphasize and drive it home. You are not developers nor are you financial analysts. And except in the usual case, your municipal staff are not equipped either.

You will need to know the developer's rate of return on the project, the way he calculates it, current construction costs, costs of union vs. non-union labor, construction times, occupancy rates, vacancy rates, tenancy costs, operating and maintenance costs, financial possibilities and techniques, pay-out periods, and a host of other things, if you want to make a deal with him that will ensure a viable project, while at the same time not "selling out" your investment at low prices.

You must know what his constraints are to know what you can reasonably extract from him in the development agreement. You must know what the trade-offs can be: density for form (and cost of the construction), or price for that concert hall which isn't going to be bringing in any rent. Otherwise, the land will stay vacant, or the project won't proceed, or you will be accused of a sell-out.

Why should you not involve a committee of council? For obvious reasons, including all of the above, plus the fact that you can't negotiate an agreement with a committee. An experienced developer will be able to run circles around a committee of politicians because he is experienced at negotiations, and you are not. And, as I said before, politicians have an image to maintain. They have a lot of ratepayers to answer to, and this is going to be a sensitive project. It's better to leave the negotiations to others until you see the total proposals package before you. Then you can decide.

What will the developer want? Basically four things: certainty, density, an established land use plan, and freedom to build with as little red tape as possible.

What are your needs? Basically three things: protection for the parts of the project that are community oriented, aesthetics and design, and completion on time (for those taxes to start coming in).

You can reconcile the two sets of needs provided that you are realistic and the developer is realistic, and provided you have a good development agreement. This brings me to the last main point!

You will need a good development agreement. It is going to be "the bible" and the terms by which your development succeeds or fails. I can't understate its importance.

You are going to need a good lawyer who knows his way around development agreements, and knows municipal law. He should be involved at an early stage and should be involved in some of the negotiations between your negotiator and your developer.

There are a myriad of things to be covered, some big, some small. There will be some standard clauses, but many that will have to be tailored made. The agreement should be put together after the basic negotiations are completed. You could, in certain

cases, have a series of agreements. Obviously, the land documents will be separate.

Under the Downtown Revitalization Program, the province will require that the agreement be reviewed prior to the province approving the project. If the agreement does not have the necessary safe-guards for the municipality (and for the provincial funds) no money will be advanced until the agreement is amended. So it would be wise for you to send a draft of the agreement to the province as soon as it has been prepared; or alternatively, make sure that the development agreement clearly spells out that its effect is conditional on provincial acceptance under the ODRP. The province may have to bail out some municipalities on the basis that we will not fund your project under the existing agreement, and therefore require a new amending agreement. But we would rather see the agreement and your project proceed in the normal way.

In closing, your "interface" with the developer in your downtown redevelopment will have some obvious new dimensions. Few of you (municipalities) have had any actual experience in core area redevelopment under the old CMHC program.

The interface with the developer and your core redevelopment will require a joint cooperative effort. You should try to make it that: a joint, and a cooperative effort. Try not to get into a bitter confrontation with your developer; set it out in agreements, and stick to them within reason. One of our clients, the Campeau Corporation, in its Harbour Square project in Toronto, at times ran into bitter confrontation with the city; but as the city became experienced in working with the developer of a keys peace of downtown Toronto, and as each recognized the legitimate concern of the other, mutual understanding turned into a surprisingly good rapport. This was in the early days of downtown development. Try to concentrate on developing the latter, and not the former.

12.3 Sarnia: A Case Study

A. Brandt,
Mayor,
City of Sarnia

The first point I would like to make in connection with core area redevelopment, is that there are no easy solutions. As a municipal politician, both as a member of council and now as Mayor, I have been involved in a form of urban renewal in Sarnia since 1971. My community was involved, unsuccessfully, in the former urban renewal program, a program that many of you will recall came into being in the '60's. Like most medium-sized cities, we lost out on the assistance of the other levels of government due to the demise of the program.

In 1971, Sarnia decided to set aside the relatively modest sum of \$200,000.00 per year in our capital budget, with the intent of simply buying land as it became available in an area council had identified as depressed. The decision was difficult financially, in that this commitment by council, absorbed about 10% of a hard-pressed capital budget. As well, it was not positively received by the community, due in part to the many previous attempts that had been made to bring about downtown renewal. All of which had failed for one reason or another.

Without a developer, with a small financial commitment and with no specific properties, other than a general area in mind, we set forth into the land of the unknown. Today we have a 14-storey office tower valued at \$10 million nearing completion, a \$9 million 19-storey residential and commercial complex under construction, a substantial amount of downtown acreage under municipal control and further developments of a substantial size under active negotiation. In addition, and as a direct result of the action taken by the city, a new \$1 million newspaper office in the downtown is all but complete, a 100-unit, \$2½ million apartment building is now under construction and many new commercial

and residential projects, some completed and some under way directly adjacent to the core area came into being.

Before getting into the detail of how these developments became a reality, I would like to share a few thoughts with you about some of the things I have learned over the past 7 years.

The first suggestion I would like to make is the necessity of being realistic in your goals and objectives, in line with your population, trading area and market potential. In order to determine the answer to this question, it may be necessary to engage a consultant. A good consultant will assess your present situation, analyze your current assets and liabilities, and give you some idea of what needs to be done. In our case, we have a city population of 55,000, urban spillage on our border of another 30,000 in the immediate metropolitan area, and a total of 120,000 in our trading area. By trading area, I mean the distance people are likely to travel, shop and do business. Realistically, Sarnia will not attract nor can it support a Toronto Eaton's Centre. We can only support a rather limited amount of commercial office space and directly across our boundary in an adjoining township, suburban malls and commercial retail activities are expanding rapidly. This leaves a rather small number of developments we are able to attract.

Different areas will, of necessity, come up with different answers, depending on size, nearby competition and a host of other variables. But, if you intend to do something about the problem, I strongly recommend that you establish some objectives, knowing full well many of them may change, and then in co-operation with your consultants and planners, decide on a course of action.

If your problems are minor and your downtown is relatively healthy, something cosmetic like a Norwich Plan, beautification of streets and parking areas, may be all that

is necessary. That option is highly unlikely, however, or you would not be here today. Another option could be a municipal land assembly, perhaps using existing parking lots or by acquiring strategic property on the open market as they become available and within the limitations of your budget. This can be an extremely slow and frustrating process. But, if you have a real determination to get something going, I would urge that you embark on a land assembly at the earliest possible time, likely before you have even vague expressions of interest from developers. Downtown land assembly, even in a depressed area, is an extremely expensive exercise. Most developers simply cannot put an assembly of land together that makes economic sense, without the help of the municipality. It is not at all uncommon for downtown land to run 10 to 20 times the cost of suburban land. Couple this with multiple ownerships and you will quickly realize why the majority of new developments locate outside the core areas.

When the land has been assembled by the municipality and when you begin negotiating with a developer the next reality that sets in is amount you will receive in return for the land you have purchased. There are no hard and fixed rules, but my understanding is that, under the old urban renewal program, a return of 25 to 40 cents on the dollar was not uncommon. Your future advantage rests almost entirely on stopping the erosion of your commercial tax base, and hopefully, increasing it in the future. I would remind you that to do nothing is also extremely expensive, since your taxable assessment may well be on the decline. If you are careful, the arithmetic will work out to your community's advantage.

In a situation where municipal land assembly is met with owner resistance (which is quite likely) two alternatives remain. The first requires designation of an area for redevelopment purposes by the provincial Housing Ministry. With that approval, you

are given the powers of expropriation. A further option, if you qualify, is the provincial downtown revitalization program. At this point in Sarnia, we have developments under way using both alternatives with and without provincial aid.

Let me assume, for the benefit of discussion, that you have assembled all or most of the property required and that you have a general idea of the kind of development you would like to have, keeping in mind my earlier comments about being realistic. The stage you have now reached is the one where you will attempt to find an interested developer.

You may well find that your phone is strangely silent, your mail box empty and, in spite of two, three or more years of effort and investment, no one is particularly anxious to purchase and develop that newly acquired piece of municipal real estate. I would strongly advise that you prepare a brochure outlining in very general terms, property, intended use as determined by your council and planners and a few details about your community. This mailing should be as broad as possible to all potential developers, and should include a return, postage paid card requesting further details. The next mailing will contain a far more costly package of information, and of course will only be sent to those individuals indicating an interest in your proposition.

Following this second mailing, council should be in a position to receive firm proposals within the time guidelines you have established. Using this method, we sent out 400 brochures on our first mailing, following which we received 43 indications of interest, and finally 4 comprehensive development proposals. From this, we ultimately chose the 14-storey commercial tower, containing some 140,000 sq.ft., 10,000 of which is ground floor retail. From a tax standpoint, the property will generate \$250,000.00 a year. In addition, we have opened up waterfront land for public use and still have available additional

land on the same site that we are confident will be developed soon, generating still additional taxation. Another method of advertising your site, is through local and major newspapers, again asking for a proposal call.

From a political standpoint, it is always difficult to undertake negotiations with developers. To the extent possible, I try to leave this in the hands of our administrative staff. Once council has determined the scope of the development, I suggest you give your administration an opportunity to work out the complex details. I am not suggesting that council disengage itself completely, and periodic updates as to progress from the administration are certainly in order. But do avoid, if you can, a public negotiating confrontation on the floor of your council chamber with your developer. It is well to keep in mind that, although the city had objectives and likely public commitments to the community, the developer has commitments as well. He has to find tenants, secure mortgage money, take certain risks and come out of it with a reasonable profit; the reality of life is such that, unless he can turn a profit, the development will not get under way, so it is a two-way street. Your demands and the protection you build into your agreement with the developer must therefore be reasonable and fair. If you embark on a program such as I have outlined, and you lack confidence in the ability of your staff, I highly recommend you find the people you must have or you will ultimately find yourself in serious difficulty. The kind of team you need will include a senior planner, a knowledgeable municipal solicitor, and perhaps as well, someone without development and negotiating experience. In this later case, a retired developer may be just the person you are looking for and he or she need not be full-time.

Even with the best of intentions, an overeager politician can create havoc with a fragile development proposal, which is

one of the prime reasons for obtaining capable, qualified staff and then allowing the staff ample room to carry out council direction.

Council direction should be general in the early stages, rather than specific and will include such things as the mix of development required. In our case, we aggressively pursued residential high-rise and we have introduced about 600 new units to the core to establish a population within walking and shopping distance. One of our community objectives was to open up public space on the waterfront, and with this purpose in mind, we set an upper limit of 50% site coverage. Lacking commercial office activities, we encouraged industrial administrative functions to locate downtown. We negotiated fair terms for repayment of the land purchased by the developer, but spread the payments over a long enough term to make the proposition attractive. These were the kinds of general policies agreed to by council, but again the detailed negotiations were carried out by staff rather than on the floor of the council chamber.

One tricky part can be the developer's proof of financial stability. Most developers are reluctant to discuss this kind of personal information publicly. We were able to circumvent this road block by requiring the developer to show proof of financial capacity to the satisfaction of the city manager. In this way, confidentiality is maintained, but council has resolved the dilemma of getting the necessary assurances without total public disclosure. Again, confidence in your staff is essential.

The success of your program could well depend on public acceptance of whatever plan you embark on and this is particularly true of the land owners and tenants in the area under consideration. Early communication can defuse any mounting opposition and during the initial stages, can prove invaluable in drafting the basic parameters for your

program. As is the case in a number of political issues, once a firm, concrete decision has been made, someone will attack the decision. But if a consensus can be established early in the game, you immediately recruit a number of allies, who can assist in applying some peer group pressure, if and when needed. The vehicle for handling this type of public forum could be council itself or a strong committee with council representation. We chose the committee approach because it allowed us the flexibility of appointing people from established organizations in the affected area.

12.4 Downtown Renewal in Galesburg

Caroline A. Goltermann,
Galesburg Downtown Village Council,
Galesburg, Illinois

Galesburg is a middle-west community established in 1836 by a group of people who dreamed of starting a school of manual labor to train ministers. Along with being the home of liberal arts college (now Knox College), Galesburg later became a major railroad centre, and even now is a focal point of north-south and east-west train transportation. It is the only city outside of New York City which can boast two Amtrak stations. A community of 37,500, it has 10 major industries, but rests in the centre of a rural county of 60,000 population and which has some of the best farmland in the country. A great influx of Swedish people occurred in 1850, which lent a different flavour of conservatism to the already existent Puritan ethic brought by the New Englanders. Much of this basic conservative, cautious attitude, resistant to change, which is characteristic of mid-west America in general, still pervades Galesburg, and it is within this framework that city government, downtown businessmen and citizens had to be convinced that downtown improvements and programs were needed to enable the centre to survive.

In 1972 it was announced that developers from Chicago - that big, bad city up north - were planning to build an enclosed mall at the northwest edge of the city. This mall would contain 500,000 sq.ft. of retail space and would open in October of 1975. The mall developer entered into an Annexation Agreement with the city and the city agreed to certain items, such as water main extension, on the same general basis as with other developers. A group of concerned property owners and merchants from the central business district immediately formed. They tried to divert the mall from the northwest part of the city to downtown, but their efforts failed.

The central business district group formally incorporated as the Galesburg Downtown Council in May of 1973. This group, a private, non-profit corporation, urged city council to become concerned with the preservation of the Central Business District. The city council assured the business group that it was, and asked the business interests to come up with an improvement plan and return it to council. The downtown council first considered a plan to close Main St., and turn it into a pedestrian mall while providing for traffic arteries around the central core. About this time the businessmen hired Real Estate Research, from Chicago, to carry out a market and economic analysis of the Galesburg Central Business District. The study requested the closing of Main Street, which is also a state highway, and the construction of a pedestrian mall, saying that downtown would need all the activity it could get including the Main St. traffic. The alternative, said the experts would further depress the downtown. The analysis added that if the central business district took no action, the mall would result in a decrease from 65% of the area's department store type of retail sales to 25% by 1985. An active, aggressive program downtown would cut the loss from 65% to 50% by 1985. The report said efforts would have to be made to consolidate the business district as vacancies occurred, and suggested that one

way would be to replace retail businesses which had vacated with different kinds of businesses, such as offices, or even housing. The need for a strong downtown organization with a full-time director and office was also emphasized. In essence, the study reaffirmed what we already knew. The downtown would have to become a place where people could relax, be entertained and find all sorts of activity and attractive street furniture and foliage.

In early 1974 the Galesburg Downtown Council employed Scruggs and Hammond, landscape architects, to produce a preliminary plan for physical improvements for the downtown. Later, traffic, transportation and parking studies were done by the city. The real estate research study was paid for by the downtown organization later reimbursed by the city, when it was implemented.

The downtown group recommended to the city council acceptance of the plan at an estimated cost of \$2 million. After some negotiations, city council approved the plan, and agreed to split the cost with slightly more than \$1 million provided by the central business district property owners, and the city slightly less. It was decided to use the newly-passed state legislation which would enable the city to levy a tax on the downtown property owners to pay for their share of the cost of improvements and maintenance of downtown improvements. This taxing district is called the Special Service Area tax, and public hearings are required and objections by 51% of property owners and electors from the area are needed to kill the proposed district. The ordinance passed in April, 1975, just before the Special Service area bonds were to be advertised for sale and, a local company filed suit against the city, saying that they would derive no benefits from the additional tax. This caused the improvements project to be broken up into phases, with the city paying it's portion first. The first phase was completed in December of 1975, which was one-quarter

of the work. It was a year before the improvements were completed. It was in October of 1975 - when only a part of the improvements were completed, lawsuits loomed, the mall had just opened, enclosing two of our former stores, Sears and Penneys, downtowners were becoming painfully aware of parking meters and winter weather, and feeling almost entirely negative - that I was hired on as the council's first full time director. I was charged with the job of establishing an office, setting up programs of fund raising, promotions and marketing, tenant acquisition and retention, maintenance, and somehow communicating that these improvements were going to be completed, be beautiful, and were just what Galesburg needed.

For the first time in my life I felt the terror that must have been in the hearts of the Christians who were thrown to the lions. I was in a newly-created job. Most people, including many of the merchants downtown, did not understand the role of the downtown council, my job, or the need for improvements. We had nowhere to go but up and up we did.

One interesting and encouraging fact that emerged over the next two years was that no stores, after the first four (2 large and 2 small) have moved from downtown to the mall. That is not to say that we have not lost businesses. In 1976 our third large department store, left, and W.T. Grant went bankrupt nationally, even though their store in Galesburg was very healthy. Both left major gaps at a very poor time. As businesses closed, however, enough faith existed in the downtown along with low rents, so that more than 20 new businesses have established downtown within a 2 year period. Most are new, with some moving in from the periphery of the central business district. The downtown council, now called the Downtown Village Council, established visual and audio logos and aggressive programs of activities, in and around the area for the

entire summer of 1976. By fall of 1976 the improvements were completed, and they began to take shape. They include extended corners of the intersections, to bring the sides of a very wide Main St. closer together; mid-block crosswalks to break up the very long blocks between intersections; four bus shelters (2 of which have not had a bus stop at them yet); a pedestrian activity centre, which include a permanent stage and seating for about 500, another little green park, kiosks, containing bulletin boards, benches, trees, flowers, pots of flowers on the sidewalk, decorative lighting and the rennovating of our old fire station into a community activity centre. We proved our point this spring when everything bloomed and downtown Galesburg indeed became beautiful and attractive. For some reason. in America, where we are surrounded by tons of foliage which we appreciate, we still manage to remove it all from our downtowns, making them solid concrete and bricks. Now we are chopping a lot of it up to buy back the foliage.

As one old sage put it, now that we've built the ball park, we've got to play the game. The improvements must be utilized. They belong to the people of Galesburg, and momentum had to be kept up to keep things happening in downtown Galesburg.

The city and Downtown Village Council have to be in constant communication in many areas. A mainteance contract was adopted in 1976, outlining responsibilities of both parties. Now constant diplomacy and negotiations is the order of the day between the DVC office and city employees and management.

Two parking programs were instituted by the Downtown Council. One was the employee permit parking program, which encouraged workers downtown to purchase a parking permit for \$7.00 a month. It enabled them to park anywhere within a block or a block and a half of Main St., with no obligation to fee parking meters. This freed the core area parking spots for customers. It has been

very successful. Galesburg has adequate parking, with off-street lots, but the wrong people were parking around the stores.

The other program is a parking validation program, whereby merchants purchase parking stickers costing \$.15 representing one hour of free parking for the customer. The validation program has been somewhat of a disaster. Eight-six businesses agreed to participate, a phenomenal number of problems arose. It was to begin in the spring of 1976. But lots were just barely ready to function by Dec. 1 during the Christmas season. Instructions for sticker uses were never mounted at the lots. Customers re-sented the change at a busy time of year, and complained to the women attendants, who became discourteous very quickly. Half the time, the gates at lot entrances did not work backing up traffic on the streets. Some merchants insisted that a purchase be made, which was not the way the program had been advertised.

The downtown council hired students to stand at the gates with identifying buttons on to greet people at the lots and hand out instructional sheets and a list of the participating businesses. People apparently don't like to ask merchants for stickers, and with some of the responses, one can't blame them. Some stores have borne the brunt of the program, spending thousands of dollars to provide free parking, while others pay very little. Needless to say, the program is being seriously reviewed. Aside from the obvious physical and psychological problems of the program, which is a simple one, the city is losing parking revenue monies hand over fist.

The city has finally admitted, and I hasten to add we rarely reach the "showdown" stage, that the lots were designed so poorly that even if they were full constantly, they would not cover the cost of operating. Back to the drawing boards. A good concept that was hastily planned and implemented.

When we completed the public improvements, our attention turned to the area of private property improvements. The downtown council began searching for architectural firms who would build facades and interiors and work directly with property owners and tenants downtown, encouraging them to make improvements and giving them direction on what to do, what materials and colors to use, etc. In the midst of this we became aware of the "Main St. project" of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Applicants were being sought for a project which would highlight three communities who were in various stages of downtown revitalization to use as models for the rest of the country. Out of 65 applicants and some very tough competition, Galesburg was chosen as one of the three. I don't mind telling you that after the struggles of the past, this was indeed a fine reward. But it is also a huge challenge.

We were chosen the Trust tells us, partly because we are an archtypical mid-west town with conventional architecture. We also have a good record of city and downtown cooperation and accomplishment. The Trust felt that it was important that the downtown organization be strong and well organized. It was felt that the National Trust project should not be viewed as pitting one section of Galesburg against another so contact was established early on with the manager of the new mall. The official position of the downtown council is that we exist to promote development of the downtown, not work against the mall, even though most downtown people think the word mall, is a synonym for "disease".

The manager of the mall and I had become friends and in fact, lived across the street from each other. We also serve together on the Trade Area Development committee of the Chamber of Commerce, of which he is chairman. So I was in a position to convince the National Trust, with the help of the city planner and the President of

our Historical Society that we are indeed capable of communicating and cooperating with the mall, and it's management. We also arranged a meeting of the President's of the five financial institutions downtown, three banks and two savings and loans and the Trust was impressed with their commitment to the downtown (they contribute heavily to the Downtown Village Council).

I must stress the role of the Galesburg Historical Society in this program. Its energetic president had spent last year garnering a membership of 1,000 and saving an old house of historical value which was due to be demolished. Their activity was certainly a factor in our selection. Knox College, steeped in history and the site of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, also became actively involved in our efforts to get the award.

In brief, the National Trust would like to prove in Galesburg that restoration of property can be economically advantageous in the saving of downtowns. They are providing us with consultants who are now doing detailed marketing and economic analyses and architectural drawings which will be completed by the end of this year. By January 1, a full time project director will be located in Galesburg, working out of the Downtwon Village office, and will live there for 2 years. For this we pay \$11,000.00 in matching funds.

The mayor of Galesburg has appointed an official commission which will act as a sounding board and advisor to the National Trust.

To further compliment our private property improvement efforts, the City of Galesburg, Downtown Village, Galesbug Historical Society and Knox College applied jointly for an architectural grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, which we received.



13.1 Promoting Downtown:

Taking a Broader Aim

Peter Barnard,
Peter Barnard Associates,
Toronto

Downtown is More Than Retailing

When downtown marketing and promotion programs first get started, it is invariably the retailers that provide the lead. Thus most promotion programs are directed at shoppers - to attract them downtown through joint advertising schemes and promotion of various events and special days. The programs are geared usually against the competition - or the suburban shopping centres. It is only natural that the first moves to promote downtown do concentrate on shopping because in most of Ontario's central business districts, retailing - or more specifically the shopping component of retailing - is by far the main downtown business function.

There are, however, many other activities and businesses which are supported in the downtown and they bear some consideration. While technically in the retailing field restaurants and other eating establishments are often not included as part of the promotions, even though they form an important element in attracting shoppers and promoting increased pedestrian traffic to the benefit of shopping areas. Also, most Ontario downtowns are the centres for business and financial institutions; the banks, the insurance companies, the realtors, the finance companies and other non-shopping Businesses which form the major component of downtown space. There are also the lawyers, doctors, dentist and small service businessmen such as barbers, cleaners, hairdressers, and so forth. All form a part of the unique community whose diverse interests form the typical downtown.

Beyond the business aspect, the downtown functions as the focus and the heart of the overall community. There are other non-business uses to which the downtown is put, not

the least of which is the pleasant stroll down main street, window shopping and watching the people go by. My point here is that downtown is a complex of different activities each interacting with the other, and each capable of assisting the other when the time comes for a promotion and marketing program.

Future of Downtown Depends on Many Things

Beyond the generation of shopping dollars, the downtown businessman's association should also consider the longer term time frame, because in the long run, the future health of business depends on the overall health of the downtown area. The future of downtown depends on getting the community to use downtown, not only by doing business there but by using it for other activities. The downtown also needs the support and commitment of the citizens of the municipality to preserving its place and central role against competition from elsewhere. Downtown needs investment, by local businessmen in their own premises and by other private sector groups in the form of new development and conversions of existing buildings to other uses. Finally there is a need for public investment by the municipality and other levels of government in services and amenities which are essential to preservation of the downtown.

Most promotion programs that I am familiar with concentrate only on the shopping public. They have not directed their attention at the types of public relations and other activities needed to foster and preserve broad public support for the downtown. Even more rare are programs aimed at attracting both private and public investment to the downtown. Is it not time we thought of these broader aims?

And Many 'Publics' are Involved

Besides attracting and maintaining shoppers through a promotion and marketing program, the other "public" or other types of customers

who can benefit the downtown businessman either directly or indirectly should be considered. Look, for example, at the following:

Municipality

The support and active interest of the council and staff of the municipality are critical to whether or not downtown gets its appropriate share of municipal attention and public works investment. Most businessmen's associations actively promote themselves to municipal government, but not always with long term objectives in mind. Because of its importance, the municipality warrants separate consideration in the development of a particular strategy by the downtown businessman to accomplish the goals we wish to achieve.

Property Owners

This is a group often nullified by downtown businessman and politicians alike, particularly those derogatorily referred to as absentee landlords. It seems to me that this is a group meriting special attention. Many downtowns house businesses on leased premises and many a blighting influence on the downtown has been attributed to lack of care and attention given to property by property owners living outside of town. Often they hold property for investment purposes only and, with little interest or commitment to the municipality, they are reluctant to invest in improvements or to go along with programs which persons resident in the community are supporting. This group merits special attention. Why not devote some effort to identifying the names and addresses of absentee owners and the development of the

small scale program - combined with other programs mentioned later - to communicate with the absentee owners. Let them know what is happening in the downtown area with the objective of interesting them in the future of downtown and emphasizing that their role in preserving the healthy business climate is one way of preserving their investment.

Special Interest Groups

Most municipalities have many groups with special interest that can be channelled towards the downtown. Heritage groups are a good example. Their interest in the downtown will only serve to promote the interest of others, get arguable attention and media coverage for the downtown and increasingly, may in the future, be able to attract government investment in the preservation of historic buildings. Other community groups such as service and other types of clubs also need to be kept informed as to what is happening downtown and what its needs are. Again simple programs of communications and public relations can add greatly to the underpinning of support for the downtown within the community and can help increase the community's use and enjoyment of their central business district.

Developers

Ultimately, if a downtown is to grow, business establishments will need to expand and perhaps whole areas will be capable of being redeveloped to more intense uses. Not all communities can hope to have significant expansion through development in the downtown area. Nevertheless the role of the

entrepreneur developer can be an important one. Yet, downtown groups rarely promote the advantages of their area to this group.

New Business

Always be on the lookout for new businesses to come into the downtown. Realtors and industrial commissioners should maintain an information network to find out when new businesses are looking for a place to locate. Often, this sort of information can be used to good advantage to directly promote a downtown location which would benefit other businesses already there.

Governments

Senior government often control important installations that could locate downtown but unfortunately often choose other locations. If downtown groups can be more vigilant and opportunistic when situations arise, more government installations could be expected to locate downtown.

One example is the recent Federal announcement about relocation of departments to various cities. Such a move should prompt the community to lobby council and inform their federal Member of Parliament of the desire to have the new offices located in the downtown area. This would increase shopping traffic, after noon hour of people into the downtown. To have such offices and other facilities go to more suburban locations would be a major opportunity missed. Provincial governments also control certain retail outlets such as the liquor and beer stores which can also help a downtown area if located within it or very nearby, or alternatively draw important customer

traffic away if located elsewhere.

Develop a Broad Strategy

Developing a broad scale marketing and promotion program such as I have been discussing requires a strategy made up of a number of individual components. The elements are as follows:

1. Decide what it is you want to sell or promote and also what it is that the target audience is looking for. In retailing you know what mix of shopping is being provided and you know what the shopper is looking for both in merchandise ranges as well as shopping convenience, parking and so forth. But what about the other publics? What has the downtown to offer and what does it want to get out of government, out of absentee owners, out of developers? In turn, what do these publics want out of the downtown area?

Against this, develop a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the downtown in relation to your hoped for objective. If you want to position downtown properly with respect to new businesses coming into the community, highlight the good points of downtown which can attract them and figure out the problems which your marketing would have to consider.

2. Understand the competition, its strengths and weaknesses, and develop that strategy accordingly. The downtown competes with other areas in the community and with other business groups for the consumer and other publics attention. It is important to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the competition in developing a strategy to promote downtown.

3. Decide on your approach. Against the knowledge of what the customer or public is looking for, the strengths and weaknesses both of your downtown and those of the competition should lead to the type of strategy required to meet your objectives with each of the various publics which we have been discussing.

Broaden the Bag of Techniques

If downtown is to be successfully marketed to a broader group of publics then more than advertising through the media or promotional events or special days are required. A marketing program would have to take on somewhat different dimensions. These could include delegations or promotional visits to press home a position to government agencies, special groups, or developers. Briefs may have to be prepared together with press releases outlining the downtown businessman's views on key matters. Direct communication and persuasion of decision makers may also be within the bag, as direct political action could be used to achieve goals which the downtown has agreed on.

13.2 An Approach to Marketing:

St. Catharines

Hugh Boyd,
Executive Director,
St. Catharines City Core

Marketing a downtown is, generally speaking, more difficult a task than that of marketing the products of an individual company. One of the main reasons for this is the composition of downtown - the variety of goods and services offered, and the people who offer them.

The latter are, mostly, independent business people who make their own decisions based on their own needs. So, consumers face all

sorts of problems many due to the inconsistencies of downtown retailers which don't exist in suburban plazas. For example, store hours in the downtown. Some stores close on Mondays, others on Wednesday afternoons, some all day Wednesday. Store hours can be from 9-6, from 9-5:30, or from 9:30-5:30, or even 9:30-6. Some stores are open Thursday and Friday evenings until 9, others Friday only, and still others don't open evenings at all.

What this does is create confusion in the minds of the consuming public, and frustrate them tremendously.

This is an example of a marketing problem which is created for downtown merchants by themselves, and it's one which only they can rectify, but often it's virtually impossible to resolve.

No matter how good your marketing plan is, when you are dealing with, and trying to market, such a diverse group of interests, the job becomes a difficult one.

Before a comprehensive marketing plan can be prepared for a downtown, it is necessary to find out how you are perceived by your target market. That is, what, in the consumer's mind, are your strengths and weaknesses?

You may think you already know this, but wouldn't it be nice to know for sure? You may only have your own thinking confirmed. Alternatively, you may find out something new.

You will undoubtedly read the results of the research and at some point say, "that's not true, it's not like that at all", when you see what some consumer thinks is a problem downtown. What you mustn't lose sight of is that the consumer perceives the situation as a problem whether or not it is in reality. Therefore, you have to treat it as a problem and educate people to the contrary.

Marketing your downtown will not be a simple, straight forward, clear cut affair. There will be many areas that you won't be able to do anything about and there will also be lots of intangibles and nebulous things to deal with.

Work with what you've got, change what is reasonable to change, and think positively.

Here's a rough outline of how we approached marketing downtown St. Catharines.

The first thing is to recognize the need for a marketing plan. We invited four advertising agencies to talk to us about our requirements, and based upon the marketing expertise, selected one to develop a marketing plan.

Representatives of the agency met with our board of management and our promotion committee members - about 15 persons in total - to find out how we felt about downtown and what should be done.

The agency then compiled an interview guide to be used in consumer research. The approach was a bit different from the usual one-on-one interview. The technique employed is called "focus group interviews".

Four groups of twelve people were selected at random from the city directory, and categorized as follows:

1. frequent downtown shoppers
 - a) men
 - b) women
2. infrequent downtown shoppers
 - a) men
 - b) women

An interview lasting about 2 hours, was conducted with each group.

The interview guide was used by the moderator to make sure that the intended direction was followed, and that all aspects

of a subject were fully discussed. At the same time there was flexibility to pursue any other dimension which emerged from the discussion.

The moderator endeavoured to obtain a consensus from each group, while trying to extract dissenting opinions.

The summary of the report on the focus group interviews as:

Virtually all respondents refer to the central shopping area as uptown - not downtown. Communications with the public should therefore include this term of reference where appropriate.

All groups tended to agree on the major obstacles to going uptown, either for shopping or on other occasions. However, infrequent visitors tended to be more vocal and emotional about these problems than the regulars - and showed a high degree of interest in suggesting improvements and discussing future developments.

Those who do visit uptown relatively frequently seemed to be much more aware of the subject - and their feelings on the various related topics eg. rose gardens, were more easily extracted.

Virtually all respondents were long-time (lifelong) residents of St. Catharines, indicating a very stable market population, since they were selected at random from the telephone directory. This suggests that the market may have well-entrenched shopping patterns, perhaps even passed on from generation to generation.

And, in fact, most of the services used eg., doctors, dentists, lawyers, insurance - have been long associations, initially formed through referral by friends or family.

Everyone denied that they "shopped" or were attracted to these services when they visited the core area. Throughout all groups, it seemed that respondents related to the uptown core for primarily retail shopping, not for these other services. However, the more reasons people have to go uptown, eg., for shopping (which refers to both looking and/or buying) and the more pleasant the environment, the more acceptable it becomes to use other services located there.

Judging from these sessions, men seem to have an entirely different approach to retail shopping than women. Men are generally very functional - wanting to get in and out with one-stop shopping. (On a few occasions they like to browse, particularly in specialty stores, eg., sports, hardware - but this appears to be a rare activity). Women tend to browse more than men, and seem to treat shopping as a form of entertainment or "outing".

However, all groups tend to come uptown with specific merchandise in mind, ie., "things they can't get anywhere else". Examples given were sporting goods, seeds, fabrics, jeans, clothes, and gifts. Browsing or window shopping uptown does not seem to be a major attraction, except for local business people who may do it during lunch hour.

Other reasons mentioned for visiting the core area were: paying bills, eg., hydro and telephone; YMCA; library; market. However, the number of visits for these purposes was very low among all groups ie., a few pay bills uptown, a few visit the library, etc. Visiting the farmers market, still primarily a shopping exercise, seemed to draw the most traffic of these various other reasons."

The report listed the positives expressed by the group interviews, the negatives and suggested improvements.

The next step was to prepare the marketing

plan itself, using the information obtained from the focus groups as a guide.

The marketing plan was broken into two basic components: a member program and a consumer program. The simple objective of the plan was to "attract an increasing number of people to shop and use the services provided by city core members".

The member program has its own specific objectives:

1. to make sure all who pay the special tax levy are aware they are members of city core;
2. to give them the fullest information on what they are now getting and will be getting in return for their extra tax money;
3. to encourage participation in specific projects by as many members as possible;
4. to use active members to attract inactive members, by describing the benefits obtained;
5. to engender pride, a sense of belonging to something very special, through their membership in city core.

The strategy recommended is as follows:

1. achieve publicity through the local press;
2. send out newsletters and other direct mail approaches;
3. hold regular membership meetings;
4. face-to-face contact with members by the executive director;
5. enlist the aid of key activists to encourage the participation in programs by other members.

Specific programs include:

1. increasing participation in the parking stamps redemption program;
2. hire a meter maid to walk the downtown area, and put a coin into expired meters, leaving a note to inform

- motorists of the service provided;
- 3. encourage members and their employees not to park their cars at meters, but to use long term parking facilities;
- 4. encourage renovation of older downtown buildings, and publicize people who do;
- 5. participation in co-operative advertising in special newspaper tabloid sections, and direct mail packages sponsored by city core;
- 6. retail staff incentives to encourage friendliness, cooperation and professionalism "beyond the call of duty";
- 7. a mail-in suggestion box for all city core member's complaints, ideas and suggestions for improvements.

The consumer program specific objectives are designed to meet the general objective of building traffic:

- 1. to communicate the considerable assets of the downtown area to the public at large, and stress that it is a convenient and pleasant place to visit on any occasion;
- 2. to highlight the particularly strong points of doing business downtown, eg., relaxing environment, friendly, professional staff, etc.;
- 3. to present city core as a unified, stable, and enduring entity.

The strategy to be employed includes:

- 1. continually present factual and straight forward information on all facets of downtown;
- 2. consistently emphasize downtown strengths;
- 3. turn perceived weaknesses into strengths, eg., the "freshness" of an "open-air mall";
- 4. present as many activities and events as possible to attract people, and to make downtown exciting.

The advertising program consists of:

- 1. making consumers aware of the availability of free parking stamps from downtown businesses;
- 2. an institutional advertising campaign presenting downtown as an entity, using radio, and newspaper and billboards in full color;
- 3. special and seasonal promotions include Moonlight Madness Sales, Summer Sidewalk Sales, and a Boxing Day Sale;
- 4. two other special promotions are downtown discount coupon books to be distributed to every household in the city; and a "downtown for downtowners" promotion aimed at downtown employees between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. on a Tuesday evening;
- 5. before Christmas, Santa Claus takes up residence downtown, and he has candy canes for the children; two tabloid sections of downtown collective advertising are inserted into the local newspaper, and radio advertising is also employed.

As I have said, the job of marketing a downtown is fairly complex. But once you get your thoughts organized and documented, and you get your campaign underway and experience successes, the easier the job becomes. There will always be a new challenge. As long as you recognize them, face up to them, take the appropriate action, and think positively, you will see the fruits of your labours.

13.3 Promoting Downtowns

David Nichols,
Intown Portland Associates,
Portland, Maine

I am delighted to have been asked to share some of my experiences in promoting downtowns.

At the start, let me confirm my conviction that most downtowns are worth saving - if the local gentry want it.

My task this morning is an easy one: to discuss with you some mechanics of promotion. The difficult part is yours: to understand these basics and to effectively implement them.

Promotion for a downtown or central business district is vital. Vital even if all you can do is preserve what you have. Vital if you want to attract new business and new customers.

By your attendance you have agreed that promotion is necessary. The big question is who does it and how do you decide what to do and who are the players.

My belief is that it is done by an association of concerned businessmen and women totally committed to the growth and development of your town. This association or business league or board of trade is funded entirely by the businesses they represent. They have full control on what happens and the clout to implement growth direction and intensity. This group works closely with government agencies at all levels for (1) major project funding, (2) transportation improvements, (3) major capital expenditures, (4) amenities, (5) streetscapes, (6) parks, (7) open areas, etc.

Let's assume that you have such an organization. Now we can look at how to define what you should promote. Let me share with you a procedure we used in Portland in 1974. A committee of 14 representing all phases of Intown business, banking, retail, communications and services was formed. They met once a week for 14 weeks to define the strengths and weaknesses of Intown Portland and what could be done to improve the weaknesses and to strengthen the strong points. We looked at everything we could find. Retail sales data, Intown office employment, parking - both on-street and off-street, and residential, hotel, retail and service activity. Just everything that we could define that would make

people want to shop Intown. We also evaluated services to business, the library, the court system facilities, printing services, etc., with an eye to developing or expanding office usage. The task was laborious but productive. Based on this analysis and a much stronger working relationship with the City of Portland we opened July 22 a new 550-car municipal parking garage and ground has been broken for a new \$5 million library. Intown Portland Associates has heavily promoted events for Intown and business is brisk.

How did we decide what to promote and what would make people want to come to Intown to shop, work, relax and enjoy themselves?

The analysis covered 34 situations that affected Portland's growth and these were detailed. With those 34 situations and 14 problems in hand, the committee then defined 28 areas of opportunity to improve downtown. Many of these opportunities had been created by the new streetscape provided by government and the new enthusiasm of business in the area.

All of this information was distilled with 3 objectives for Intown:

1. Reverse the trend in share of area sales.
2. Concentrate on promoting daytime shopping.
3. Increase total business activity in Intown Portland.

The objectives were to be implemented by 12 distinct strategies, each to be developed concurrently and each to stand on its own. Most of these evolved around additional improvement in facilities, services and quality of environment.

The 13 strategies were again reduced to 7 points in a plan of action:

1. Encourage new family-type restaurants - form a restaurant association.
2. Get a new grocery store.

3. Have a city hall representative on the board to help understand the problems of litter and parking.
4. IPA promotion committee charged to develop a schedule of entertainment events and a copy platform for advertising and also a media schedule.
5. Take a good look at total free parking.
6. In the interim, encourage stores to give freely Park & Shop stamps.
7. Consider a mini-bus loop and/or a free bus service.

All of this was done before a penny was spent on promotion or advertising. In 1975 we spent about \$50,000 on promotion, in 1976 about \$40,000 and in 1977 we will spend about \$45,000, mostly in media.

What has worked for us?

In 1975 we opened a reconstructed Congress St. (main street) with a Guinness World Book of Record breaking competition. It created great excitement and people still talk about the big tent on Middle St. or the bed race down Congress St. We ran a "Mom of the Year" promotion for Mother's Day with about \$3,000 in prizes. Moms shopped and about 12,000 registered for prizes. The Summer Music Festival began and has grown to a stable, looked for summer event. Additional dollars were spent to promote shopping for Old Fashioned Bargain Days, Back to School and Christmas.

1976 was a different kind of year. We promoted George Washington birthday sales, the Budweiser Clydesdales, the Death of Winter Pageant, Tennis Classic, Heritage Days, Summer Music Festival, Back to School week with an antique carousel, farrier school, clowns, music, etc., as well as a window painting contest by students and Christmas with Abner the Mouse, Christmas music, Santa's arrival, Tree Lighting Ceremony, etc. and we also ran a minimum of image advertising throughout the year. A successful newspaper campaign

"Monday Night on Intown" was introduced.

Now for 1977. GWBD, opening of the new civic centre, Ice Capades, Tennis Classic, Circus Week, First Monday on Intown, an outgrowth of Monday Night on Intown, Summer Music Festival, a beefed up Old Fashioned Bargain Days complete with barbershop quartet, strolling minstrel and a live medicine man show. The carousel was unavailable, so Back to School was promoted only on TV - very successfully. We had planned an apple festival but that fell through. Now we are working to expand our Christmas decorations program and carillon music which was so successful last year.

To date we believe our promotional efforts have been effective. Intown has developed a wide variety of distinctive events which have attracted the quality shopper. We also strongly encourage the arts in Portland. We work closely with the School of Art, the Portland Museum of Art, the Portland Symphony, Longfellow House, Greater Portland Landmarks and the many art galleries. We are convinced that the arts are a stable and substantial part of our community and one that helps generate the quality of shopper we are looking for.

But we still feel that our advertising dollar can be better spent. We are beginning to re-evaluate our markets and how we can capitalize on an expanded market base. How much result in either pedestrian traffic or sales dollar can we expect from these market segments:

1. Local people in a 20-30 mile radius.
2. Intown daytime employees.
3. New residents (about 10-20% a year).
4. Vacationers and Conventioneers.
5. People who attend civic centre events.
6. Other area residents, 50-150 mile radius for one day shopping spree.

Next, we will look at how to tie-in the

restaurants, hotels, and shops to effectively market to these groups. The role of IPA is to provide activities and to generate the type of atmosphere to draw people to Intown. It is the responsibility of the merchants to get the pedestrian into the store and to sell him.

IPA has a success story to tell, certainly, but there would be no story without the total commitment of local business and government heads. I am embarrassed, at times, at the number of hours I demand from many of my board of directors, committee chairmen and committee members. But the job will not be done without them. No matter how competent or large the association staff, the real dollar decisions must always rest on the

shoulders of the community leaders whose life depends on the area.

A downtown cannot succeed without finding its strengths, weaknesses and potential, and then spending every available resource to meet these demands. And don't forget, downtown is where it's all at! The centre of commerce, retail and legal services, government, courts, medicine, arts. It is your responsibility to protect it and keep it strong. A beautiful TV commercial, a nifty radio ad or a full colour page in the paper can be pretty, but if you do not back up the advertising with quality of street-scape, merchandise, price and service. . . if in fact the sidewalks have holes in them and the buildings are falling down, you will not get the customer back a second time.



Heritage conservation
in the downtown **14**

14.1 Heritage Planning: Some Concerns

Merilyn McKelvey,
Heritage Planner,
Kingston, Ontario

Ontario has many small and medium-sized towns which once were expected to become major cities. Some of them almost did. Kingston, for example, became the capital of Upper and Lower Canada in the early 1840's but ultimately lost this distinction to Ottawa. Dundas didn't see how it could fail to become a thriving city, located as it was at the junction of the five major highways leading to Toronto, Guelph, London, Ancaster and Niagara.

Based on these dreams of greatness, the business communities erected handsome buildings designed in the latest styles and built them to last. As these dreams faded and as progress in the name of growth, by-passed the towns, they stagnated and the building boom came to an end. Except for the destruction brought by fire, the stagnation has had a desirable effect, that of preserving intact many streetscapes as they were in the 19th century.

Lately, however, the downtowns of many areas are being threatened. There are 6 major problems that are facing the conservation of heritage downtowns.

The first is the condition of the buildings themselves. Many have had their facades greatly altered over the years, especially on the ground floor, in an attempt to keep up with the changing fashions of merchandising. Sometimes this has led to a weakening of the structure of the building. The alterations have also invariably been for the worst from a heritage viewpoint as angelstone or a large projecting neon sign were indiscriminately added to buildings. The cladding materials such as stucco, vitrilite and insulbrick siding have been intruded into a streetscape which originally was more simply composed of brick, stone, wood and small panes of glass. Most older buildings do not

have the loadcarrying capacity of 100 pounds per square foot and so their structural inadequacies limit their recycling potential.

The second problem is the street environment. There has been an erosion of the aesthetic quality and harmony of the streetscape as each store front is altered independent of its neighbours with each merchant trying to out-class and outattract the other. There is rarely an appreciation of the need for the unity of appeal.

Narrow sidewalks, lack of public seating, harsh lighting, cracked and worn pavement, the scarcity of vegetation or any sort of green space, inappropriately-located and poorly-designed bus tops, telephone booths, with wires everywhere - in short, the street environment is rarely conducive or encouraging to someone who plans to spend a wet day or a cold, snowy evening shopping. This is especially true when the street environment is compared to that of a nearby shopping mall.

The shopping mall is the third problem that I have identified. Its competition is killing downtowns across Canada and it is not hard to see why. The land appears to be cheaper and readily available in large parcels. The developer does not need to fuss with an older building but can tailor the space distribution in the new building accordingly to his client's exact needs. Long, low, one-storey buildings reduce the need for staff, freight elevators, and space-consuming stairways. The management of the various stores in a mall is usually unified under one authority from its inception and so maintenance costs can be shared and a group advertising program set up. And the parking is free and plentiful.

This leads to my fourth problem for the heritage planner working in the downtown, that of transportation. Parking in the downtown of every major town costs money and the day tripper must pay anywhere from up to \$2.00 for a half hour. The parking

spaces are either inconveniently located or require the great skill of parallel parking. Congestion is another aspect of the transportation problem - not only do the downtown streets serve the businesses and stores, they are all too often also through highways in their own right. For example, Highway No. 48, north from Scarborough, has increasingly come to dominate the once peaceful village of Markham. Few like to window shop or browse with gravel trucks and moving vans rumbling beside them. Exhaust pollutes the air and soils the buildings as well as the people. Competition with the through traffic makes it difficult to maneuver. Making the main street into a one-way street, as Kingston has done, may improve one's ability to turn onto side-streets, but it also tends to increase the traffic's speed. Public transit may be more related to serving the shopping centres or suburban universities, or it may serve the downtown erratically and unrealiably.

The fifth problem is the lack of variety and depth of the goods and services available in the downtown. It has been shown that most purchasing revolves around grocery shopping - there is an appreciable spin-off effect from food shoppers bent on one-stop shopping. But how many downtown's offer a major food store?

The lack of a major downtown department store, such as a Bay or Woolco, with their wide range of goods, also hampers the economic survival of the smaller downtown shops. Unless the basic goods and services are available, businesses, which offer specialty product and services will lose their market to shops better located. Only a few specialty districts, such as Elora and Niagara-on-the-Lake, are economically possible for it is possible to oversaturate an area with boutiques, high quality restaurants and museums.

The sixth and final problem I would like to mention is the fact that many downtowns are located along side a river. Rivers have a tendency to flood periodically and hence the

advent of the 25 year flood line. Unfortunately, many of a town's oldest buildings are found within the flood plain. And accordingly their redevelopment is discouraged or halted all together by conservation authorities who fear the damage of another Hurrican Hazel. In some instances the conservation authorities have sought the conservation of nature's way over that of our heritage value. For example, along the Grand River in the Galt section of Cambridge, a century old Turnbull stone factory once rose 4 storeys from the river. It was a major focal point of views from Galt's many bridges. Today only the ruins of this stone building remain. A very successful park and mini-amphitheatre have been created in the ruins but this only rankles those who realized that this same park could have been created on nearby vacant land without the loss of one of the stone buildings which has made Galt famous.

There are many other problems associated with heritage planning. The six already mentioned have been relatively easy to identify in this general discussion. However, the solutions are much more difficult to pinpoint. I have subscribed to that philosophy which believes that the identification of the problems goes a long way towards providing the solutions. I am optimistic that as the value of the downtowns are realized, municipal councils and other policy setting groups will come to grips with these problems. Land gobbling shopping centres must surely be restricted in number, if not in size, as has been done in London, Ontario, when the great need to conserve land and buildings is realized. Downtown merchants must band together to provide parking, visual unity, and promote their district professionally. The heritage quality of their buildings is a major drawing card and should be used as the basic ingredient of downtown revitalization.

14.2 Heritage Properties and the Private

Investor

D. Walsh,
Realco Properties Ltd.,
Toronto

Why does a private company invest in heritage properties?

With today's slow economy, rents are depressed and it is very difficult to justify any income properties on the basis of cash flow or return on investment. Thus, it is more important today to emphasize asset value. What makes the difference with heritage properties is "cost" - because of the price of building materials today, developers see old buildings as ready-made packages of materials. Even after knocking out walls, installing new wiring and plumbing and meeting the tough new fire codes, recycling a structure can cost 25% to 30% less than building new.

Thus, many of the financial benefits offered by heritage properties are, in our company's view, long term, in that a heritage property is unique and is often constructed of materials which are no longer readily available. The property should appreciate in the same way that an antique price of furniture would. Furthermore, as a community gains more interest in its history, such heritage properties are sure to appreciate in value over the long term.

Unlike today's modern structures, old buildings are a visual reminder of a city's individuality. They are friendly structures, possessing detail and conveying a sense of history. In addition, tenants of re-cycled buildings often have the benefit of larger spaces, bigger windows, higher ceilings and generally, a more pleasant working environment.

We have also found that historic buildings are attractive to tenants because they provide a company with its own unique identity within the community. Buildings such as the Flat Iron in Toronto or the St. Lawrence Hall in Port Hope are well-known landmarks and

are consequently easily found by customers and clients.

Areas where there are a number of heritage properties are generally tourist centres, popular with visitors, and a benefit to the total community. These areas must be safe, pleasant and comfortable, located within a community committed to these objectives. As an area improves, the community benefits through increased property taxes. Thus, there is a mutual relationship between heritage properties and the community within which they are located - each one sustains and benefits the other.

The renovation of older buildings offers several financial advantages:

Renovations of a heritage property can be completed much more quickly than construction of a new building - 9 months for an older property compared to 18 months for a new structure.

Surprisingly, an investor is usually able to obtain better financing on an older building than on a new building, because of the possibility of having the vendor take back a second mortgage, so that less cash is required.

For example, in Port Hope the structure was purchased for \$165,000 and the price was divided on the basis of \$45,000 cash on closing and \$120,000 as a vendor-take-back second mortgage at 10%, postponable to a new first mortgage. Approximately \$240,000 was spent in renovations, financed through a bank loan. On completion of the renovations, we arranged a new first mortgage of \$250,000. Our end cash investment was thus only \$35,000. Such financing would not be possible with a new structure.

Purchase Price: \$165,000
 - Cash: \$ 45,000
 Mortgage: 120,000

Financing

after Renovations

Value: \$405,000
 - Cash: 35,000
 1st Mortgage: 250,000
 2nd Mortgage: 120,000

What type of property is of most interest to the private investor?

In looking for heritage properties, or in evaluating one, it is important to consider the following factors:

- a) What type of downtown is the property located in?

It is important that the downtown be healthy, and that there be a sense of commitment from the community, as evidenced by improvements to the streetscape, renovation of other older buildings, the existence of business improvement areas, and signs of local community pride. If such factors are not apparent, there is a danger that the downtown is in a decline which will be difficult to check.

- b) Where is the property located within the town?

If the heritage property has a high pedestrian traffic location in relation to other properties, then the ground floor will have greater potential for retail use, and as a central office location.

A prime location makes a property easier to lease, and offers a greater opportunity for appreciation over the long term.

- c) What is the condition of the building?

The most important factor to consider is the structure of the building and also its architectural characteristics, including the quality of the brick, beams and wooden floors.

How can heritage properties be made financially successful?

A potential investor should be continually on the lookout for heritage properties which are no longer serving their original function, such as old mills, fire halls, schools, post offices, banks, etc. Such buildings offer excellent opportunities for recycling to new uses.

The basic criterion in making heritage properties successful from a financial point of view is to match the cost of the purchase of the property and its renovations, with the potential cash flow that it can be expected to generate. The major difficulty is in leasing space prior to renovating the property. Pre-leasing makes financing much easier. However, in many cases, this is not possible.

Generally, residential use is the safest type of renovation in that there are always people looking for accommodation. However, it is usually a less profitable use in the long run, compared to office and retail use. In small towns, where office space is minimal, renovation for office use is risky without first securing a tenant - it is best to obtain a commitment from a major office user in the town to rent space in the building, before renovating for office use.

It is necessary to examine the whole building and see what are its possible uses. For example, in Port Hope retail stores were natural on the ground floor, since the property was located on the main street. Office use was ideal for the second floor, and residential apartments are likely the most practical use for the upper two floors.

In Port Hope, we were able to obtain Eldorado Nuclear Limited as an anchor tenant for the building. They leased second floor space which is usually difficult to lease, and this tenant enabled us to proceed with major renovations to the building.

Often, in smaller towns, major renovations to heritage properties are difficult because the level of rents that can reasonably be expected will not justify construction costs. However, it is still possible to carry out minor renovations which will have a substantial economic benefit, the most important being building facades, windows, especially at street level, and other interior design factors, such as lighting, painting and plant hangings, etc.

An important advantage of minor renovations is that they often do not require a building permit, and so a great deal of time can be saved. A building permit is generally only necessary when structural changes are to be carried out or walls are to be removed. Permits for electrical and plumbing work are usually easy to obtain.

In proceeding with renovations to a heritage property and in trying to make them correspond with your financial capabilities, it is often worthwhile to consider renovating a building in stages. For example, in the Flat Iron building in Toronto, we renovated each floor as the original leases expired. In leasing to new tenants, we attempted to have them do as many of the renovations as possible. In this way, we always had a cash flow from the building, and we did not have to suffer through an extended period of construction. With an empty building, it is not always feasible to work in stages, however, and in some cases, it will cause more trouble than it is worth.

In renovating a heritage property, it is wise to obtain the advice of an architect to determine how a building's unique architectural characteristics can be used to

best advantage. By utilizing a structure's own particular features, a great deal of time and money can be saved.

Private investors should also examine the assistance available from municipalities such as building improvement programs for residential properties and also programs sponsored by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. We received a grant of \$9,000 for the St. Lawrence Building and a grant of \$28,000 for the Gooderham Flat Iron Building, to help in the restoration of the facades of both properties.

On major projects, a building owner should consider the alternatives of a joint venture or partnership arrangement with a developer or with an architect, builder, or some combination of all three. Also, it is often worthwhile to offer a potential tenant an interest in the building, as an inducement to locate there.

14.3 Guelph: Heritage Conservation in the Downtown

Cameron Man,
Landplan,
Guelph, Ontario

To set the context, Guelph is a fairly typical small Ontario city with a population of approximately 70,000. The city has approximately 500,000 sq.ft. of retail space in the central core and until quite recently had a strong and vital commercial centre. In the last three years, there has been the development of at least three shopping centres, one of which has 200,000 sq.ft. of retail space and is now adding another 200,000 sq.ft. of retail space. In addition, zoning approval has been granted for a major shopping centre in the northwest sector of the city. The net result is that the downtown core has seen the movement of several businesses and the creation of additional competitors in the suburban centres. It has also witnessed the relocation of the major department store and the

last major grocery chain to one of these suburban centres, and the problem has been further aggravated by a series of disastrous fires in some of the stone buildings that were typical of the Guelph class stone architecture.

In January, 1976, the board of management of the business improvement area with the support of the Chamber of Commerce, took the initiative and advertised for consultants to assist the business community in developing a revitalization plan for the central business core.

The board and the chamber solicited the moral support of the city council and set out to develop a plan of action for the improvement of the central business district, based on a revitalization and upgrading of the private properties in the central core. Their stated objective was to design a simple and economic revitalization program that would take the first step in attempting to solve the problems that were evident in central Guelph. It was the consultants' task to attempt to stabilize and improve the existing property and business base; make more effective use of the resources and special character of the downtown buildings; establish procedures to improve the investment climate and encourage new development to locate in downtown; to revive faith in the downtown's vitality evidenced by positive action.

Specifically, the chamber realized that the problem was a complex one, and that more than a clean-up campaign of buildings and frontages was necessary. The chamber wished to show its concern and commitment to start the ball rolling and wished to start with something that could be handled physically and economically in the immediate short term.

The proposed approach was a plan of action with three principle ingredients:

1. The Block Action Plan
2. A Manual of Building Improvements
3. Professional assistance to the individual building owners and tenants.

Block Action Plan

Guelph has a substantial number of fine stone buildings representative of late 19th century architecture. Nonetheless, there is diversity in the architecture from block to block. For this reason, a Block Action Plan was proposed as the "building blocks" for an improvement program. This simple recognizes what most people already know - that the individual owner's environment includes his neighbours on his side of the street as well as those on the other side of the street from one intersection to the next. What an owner does two blocks up and around the corner is of general interest but what the fellow does two doors up and across the street effects him directly. Thus, we attempted to get merchants in each particular block to work together with their immediate neighbours in developing a plan of action for their block.

The study area consisted of 10 block areas that had specific action plans. The individual merchant in each block was contacted and invited to a Block Action meeting. The Block Action Plan provided the merchant with two types of information:

1. Design Guidelines - These defined the ground rules that applied to everybody for items of common interest; a range of suitable material, colour, graphics, signages, etc. The Design Guidelines also established the overall character and theme for each particular block. These themes were evolved from what already exists.
2. Individual Improvements - Specific improvements to each property were illustrated in block elevations and itemized for each property. This catalogue of improvements showed each merchant what type of improvements he should make and also to see which of his neighbours might

be considering similar improvements. It was and is our hope that they might cooperate in the purchasing of materials and contracting services in order to minimize costs.

The Block Action Plans divided the work into Stage 1 and Stage 2 operations. Stage 1 operations itemized those immediate improvements specific to a clean-up campaign. Stage 2 illustrates those further improvements that the individual merchant may wish to pursue in the longer term as time and money permit.

A Manual of Building Improvements

The second ingredient of the plan of action was a Manual of Building Improvements. The Manual was developed in three parts.

1. Things that you should know before you start:

This dealt with items such as contractors, contracts, insurance, consultants, project financing and economic feasibility.

2. Things you can do right away:

This dealt with the techniques and sources for masonry cleaning, masonry repair, awnings, window replacement, painting, parapet and cornice repairs, roof and mansard repairs.

3. Further action and future protection:

This dealt with landscape improvements, signage control, lighting improvements and architectural guidelines for the block.

Professional Assistance to the Individual Building Owners and Tenants

Basically, we made the services of our office available to the merchants relative to any questions they might have in making improvements of their own property. Where this meant extensive work requiring building permits and major structural changes, we advised on

the employment of a consultant. Where the work was of a subjective nature and advice was required, we provide this to the individual owner or tenant.

Process

Here, briefly, is the process we went through in order to implement the Plan of Action. Having decided on a Plan of Action, it was necessary that we undertake certain work as consultants preparatory to Block Action meetings. As a start, we completed an inventory of ownership of the various properties within the study area. This was necessary so that we could identify the individuals to be contacted and invited to attend the Block Action meetings and be part of the process. Secondly, we photographed the entire facade of each block at a workable scale, (in this particular case one quarter of an inch to the foot). While this work was going on, we developed a series of analysis drawings of the study area. These analysis drawings included the following:

1. Historic buildings (these were compiled from two historic building studies that have been done by noted historians).
2. In-town versus out-of-town ownerships. (There had been a general feeling among the citizens of Guelph that part of the reason for the seeming decay was the preponderance of absentee landlords). As we did the examinations of title, we found that the majority of buildings in Guelph were owned by members of the community. The majority of absentee landlords were corporate landowners, such as the banks and trust companies who maintained branch operations in the city. There were a very limited number of absentee landlords of the non-corporate group and they could hardly be blamed for the overall

appearance of the downtown even if all of their properties were in a state of decay.

3. We identified areas susceptible to immediate visual change, in particular vacant lots, burnt-out buildings and buildings of less than substantial construction, which were, in essence, ready for redevelopment. We looked at this group as opportunities rather than liabilities.
4. We drew up a constraint analysis, based on existing bylaws mandating height limitations, visual site lines and other architectural controls.
5. We identified "anchor buildings", excellent vistas and visual termini.

On completion of the photo montages and development of base drawings from same and with the various analysis drawings, we proceeded to develop a series of overlays on transparency of the evident problems in a particular block area. The transparencies highlighted obvious visual anomalies and specifically identified the character and pattern in the building transparencies. Our next step brought together the merchants in a particular block. Members of the chamber of commerce and in particular, the executive director assisted in identifying a particularly sympathetic merchant in each block who could act as a block leader. We then consulted with the block leader as to an appropriate time for meeting of merchants in that particular block.

Printed invitations were hand delivered to each owner and tenant in a particular block notifying them of the place, time and purpose of the first block meeting. At the block meetings, we reviewed the ownership pattern and the overall analysis of the critical elements in the core, we reviewed the drawings

of the specific facades pointing out the anomalies and consistencies. Frequently, the merchants in the block identified problems that we had not noted, particularly evident to them, the block meetings helped us as consultants to sense what improvements were needed and desired. After the block meeting, we had individual discussions with the merchants who had difficult problems. After the first block meetings, we attempted to synthesize the comments, questions and suggestions into a series of guideline drawings for a particular block. These recommendations attempted to:

1. Reinforce where possible the character of each of the blocks.
2. Establish an architectural theme and give some coordination to the appearance of the block overall in terms of colour, signage, etc.
3. Suggest voluntary procedures to control the streetwall appearance of infill buildings which might replace vacant lots, burned-out buildings, obsolete buildings or parking lots.

It became apparent that all blocks did not have a readily definable character upon which to build a theme. Some were broken by large parking areas, development opportunities and non-descript buildings, making it difficult to establish any kind of architectural theme or overall coordination. In other blocks it was quite evident that there was a dominant streetwall and very specific actions were necessary to bring the block up to a desirable standard.

A second series of block meetings were held at which we made specific recommendations. These recommendations included maximum streetwall height at street line, and minimum streetwall height at street line. These recommendations also dealt with the degree of transparency at street level (8 to 12

feet), predominant building material, colour range and signage band size and location.

Again, the merchants were given ample opportunity to comment on the reality of the recommendations. The specific recommendations were then extracted and detailed to the individual merchant on an individual basis, with opportunity to discuss in detail, the specific improvements recommended for his property in the context of the overall block. Along with his drawing of recommended improvements, the owners received a copy of the Manual of Improvements previously mentioned. Hopefully the manual will assist him in determining how he can get the work done and give him an idea of the approximate price to him.

In summary, we are now at the stage where each merchant has received specific guidelines for the improvement of his property in the context of the overall block and we are starting to see the first actions relative to improvement. Throughout the process (with consent of the board of management), we kept the city planning agencies informed of our progress and of our recommendations to ensure that we were not at odds with the plans of the city government.

We appreciated the moral support and assistance provided by the city planners in providing information which was not otherwise available. Throughout the process, we had support from the local press and radio in explaining what we were attempting and our method.

Progress

At this time, we have verbal commitments from a significant number of owners in the downtown that they will undertake to upgrade their facilities based on the Plan of Action.

This was a self-initiated program by those who had the most to lose and gain, the individual merchants. We have seen some improvements already and we hope to see many more in the future. We are confident that Guelph has taken the first step to recovery in revitalization of the commercial centre. In closing, I am proud to say that the merchants have done this without asking for financial assistance from outside the community.



The vitality of cities **15**

15.1 The Vitality of Cities

Arnold Edinborough

Times are changing and they are changing particularly fast for Canada's towns and cities.

For a long time our city planning was minimal; , wherever there was money to be made, we made it. That resulted in blighted river fronts and lakeshores, it resulted in a desolation of Sudbury and its surroundings and the chemical stink of Cornwall, Hawksbury and other paper mill towns on the Ottawa River and in the northern part of the province; it resulted in polluted rivers and even polluted lakes.

Then, after the war, it seemed right to leave this mess and if not solve the problem, lose it, so people went out to the suburbs and left the downtown to quietly rot away. Handsome buildings were bulldozed into parking lots to cope with the automobiles which brought people in daily to work downtown from their suburban base. Chambers of commerce, instead of tackling this problem and doing something about maintaining the downtown, rather encouraged it as their members also joined it by taking their stores to the suburban shopping plazas.

But in the last 15 years there have been great changes. The suburban shopping plaza is a useful and convenient method of getting people in and out of the shops, but it has no soul. New communities often have a very vibrant life, but they don't have the solid, traditional dynamism that an ancient foundation has. People also got tired of driving back and forth.

The change in people's thinking was quickly latched on to by a new brand of civic politician. All of a sudden we had a reform council, not only in Toronto but in other metropolises like Vancouver and the way in which planning suddenly became very much more involved in downtown development and the resulting rows at city halls across the province brought the

downtown back into focus.

It is typical of the thinking of the last 5 years particularly that this symposium has so many delegates. What are the ingredients of this new attitude towards downtown?

A Sense of Tradition

Whether it is Levesque in Quebec or educational television in Ontario, or a new breed of Canadian who, when he travels abroad tries to find similar roots when he comes home, I cannot say. Maybe it is all of them. But the fact is that we have suddenly become aware that a nation without a past is a nation without a future and we should look for that past wherever it can be found. This led to local historical boards getting more attention from both their municipal councils and the provincial government and, instead of knocking down everything built before 1940, we began to look to see if there wasn't something worth preserving, not just in the solid limestone of places like Kingston and Guelph, but also in the brick and ginger-bread of many of our city streets.

A Sense of Community

Where people have been living for a long time there is an indefinable, but obvious, sense of belonging. Just as a sense of tradition and of history began to put people into the direct stream of their heritage, so this sense of community began to say to people, "This is where we live and we live here differently from anywhere else in the world, so let's show it".

These two major psychological forces, a sense of tradition and a sense of community are now, in my view, becoming a dominant characteristic of the province of Ontario. I therefore applaud the things said by the Minister in his speech to you yesterday in which he showed how the province will help you in your communities to embody this new feeling in bricks and mortar and a new sense of achievement.

Let me also add some other reasons why I think the time is now ripe to make Ontario's cities and towns a very much better place to live.

1. We have the dreadful example of the United States whose problems are compounded by racial differences and even older city services. The rotting centre of New York, the desolation of downtown Cleveland are only two examples which, without being morally superior, we can at least say, "let's not do it that way". In other words, the folly of allowing downtown to deteriorate is surely clear to us.

2. There is a new regionalism emerging which again the Minister alluded to yesterday which does not want to go always to the big city and that is because many of the amenities formerly in the big city are now in the little city and town. Think back just 20 years to a town like Peterborough, a union town, a manufacturing town where there was a Teachers' College and that was all. Peterborough now has a university which has established a country-wide reputation, it is in the process of setting up a very good art gallery and it has already made plans to rehabilitate its distinguished older buildings downtown.

Take Stratford, a town which 25 years ago had only repair shops for the CNR and now has the most praised Shakespearean theatre in the world, with all the attendant revitalization and the enormous business that the theatre has brought to the city.

Take Kingston, which used to regularly knock down its old buildings to put up gas stations,

at one point demolished the columns of its city hall and had the Grand Theatre tightly locked and totally unoccupied. Its university now has tremendously expanded, the Grand Theatre is back in operation, there is a professional symphony orchestra and two professional theatres.

And this leads me to another reason why our downtown communities are surging. Through LIP grants, through Wintario, through Heritage Ontario, it is not just buildings and space that are being looked after, it is the people who inhabit those buildings and spaces. We have had an absolute cultural explosion in this country in the last 15 years and I was rather surprised that the Minister yesterday did not mention this. He did not even mention Wintario, yet many of the changes that have been brought about in our downtown areas have been substantially aided by Wintario, by funds wither already spent or committed. I think of the new Massey Hall here in Toronto, I think of the Kitchener Arts Centre - the Centre in the Square, I think of the Theatre London, a reconstruction, not a new building.

When you put it all together, you begin to see, I think that we are now in one of the more enlightened eras of the city in Canada. Indeed, the city and true community which a city breeds must be where we concentrate our efforts, for this is the age of the city and if our cities are to be worth living in, we have to make real efforts.

As Lewis Mumford said over 20 years ago, and it has never been better said:

" We must restore the city the maternal, life-nuturing functions, the autonomous activities, the symbiotic associations that have long been neglected or suppressed. For the city should be an organ of love; and the economy of cities is the cure and culture of men".

